

HOME WITH THE HOOPING-COUGH;

OR,

HOW THEY MADE THE BEST OF IT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARY POWELL."

CHAPTER I.

"THERE'S nothing I should like better," said Fulk Howard, meditatively, as he and his brothers sat round the fire at dusk, while the sleet pattered against the windows, "than to carry out my ideas on an island."

"Why, isn't Great Britain an island?" said Lewis.

"Great Britain is too big."

"Have Little Britain, then," cried Mervyn, at which his elder brothers laughed.

They had been talking about Robinson Crusoe, and Alexander Selkirk, and John Adams at Pitcairn's Island, and Garibaldi at Caprera, and Napoleon at Elba—where Lewis thought he had better have made himself comfortable than have got sent to St. Helena.

"Mervyn would rather say something silly than say nothing," observed Fulk. "I was talking seriously, when I said I should like to carry out my ideas on an island."

"Very well then, why should not you?" said his father, whom they had all supposed asleep. "Nothing can be more easy, if you will give the reins to your imagination. Here are you all at home with the hooping-cough, exiled from your holiday companions, and shut up indoors for a few weeks. Why not consider the garden an island, bounded by brick walls, instead of water? Call it the kingdom of Gardenia, and this house your palace. You can be king, Lewis lords, and Mervyn commons. Of course, you'll have two representative chambers."

Saying which, Mr. Howard, who had spoken very drowsily, appeared again to go to sleep.

"I say, though," said Lewis, nudging his elder brother, and lowering his voice, "how am I, being singular, to be plural?"

"Don't affect singularity," said Fulk, at which they again laughed.

"But really, it was a very good idea of papa's," persisted Lewis.
"Let's try it on. How shall we begin?"

"We must have a constitutional assembly," said Fulk, after a pause;
"and bye-laws and so forth, and raise taxes."

"Who's to pay them?" said Lewis.

"The commons, of course."

"That's hard upon me," said little Mervyn, "for I've only three-and-sevenpence-halfpenny."

"Oh! we won't take it all, only you must submit to an income-tax."

"Why should I?" remonstrated Mervyn.

"Why should you, you silly little boy? Why, because you should pay for your advantages—the advantages of a free and liberal government."

"I thought liberal was giving, not taking."

"Ah, that's a *façon de parler*. You look like a little John Bull, with your hands in your pockets."

"I shall keep them there," said Mervyn, knowingly, "to be sure my money's safe."

"Better bury it, Mervy," said Lewis, laughing.

"For you to dig up, I suppose? No, thank you, Master Lewis."

"Oh, we'll have a paper currency," said Fulk.

"Very well, I'm quite agreeable to it," said Lewis. "I'll be master of the mint, and issue lots of notes."

"The Bank of England makes them, old boy."

"Oh! then I'll be a bank director. I suppose the directors may help themselves, mayn't they?"

Here Lewis saw his father smile, and knew he was not quite asleep.

"You must only issue a limited number, I believe," said Fulk.

"Well, then, they shall be at a high figure," said Lewis. "Mervyn, my boy, I'll give you a thousand pounds."

"Oh, thank you!" cried Mervyn.

"And then, you know, you'll bear a good deal of taxing," said Fulk.

"Oh! I shan't mind that; you'll want a good many notes yourself, to buy laws with."

"Buy laws? Oh you ridiculous chap!" And the boys roared with

laughter. "Papa, only think of Mervyn; he says we shall want plenty of money to buy laws with."

"Well, I'm sure you said just now you must buy laws," said Mervyn.

"No, Mervy, I said we must *make* bye-laws; b, y, e—do you see?"

"Oh! that's it, is it?" said Mervy, who was none the wiser. "Well, go on."

But Fulk had a bad fit of coughing, and they were all quiet for a little while.

"What sort of constitution shall we have?" was Lewis's next inquiry.

"Well," said Fulk, in rather a weak voice, "I think I shall make a digest of various codes."

"I hope we may be able to digest it," said Lewis, at which Mervyn laughed immoderately.

"Order, Lower House!" said Lewis frowning; on which Mervyn was quiet.

"Shall we be obliged to obey your laws, whether we like them or not?" he presently asked.

"Certainly, when they have passed. Much use in them else. However, they will not be like the laws of the Medes and Persians, which altered not. *My* code will admit of amendments."

"I'm glad of that," said Lewis.

"Because," pursued Fulk, "there is no knowing what new improvements and discoveries may be in store. How could the Anglo-Saxons, for instance, make laws for the regulation of railways?"

"Of course they couldn't, nor for the uniform of the penny postmen," said Lewis.

"The Saxons," continued Fulk, rather grandly, because he thought Mr. Howard might perhaps be attending to him, "provided for the circumstances of the day, either by altering old laws or making new ones, as the wants of the country required."

"You are quite right, Fulk," said Mr. Howard, who now roused up, finding it impossible to obtain forty winks during such a small fire of chatter.

"So we will do the same," said Fulk; "I shall convene you, the nobles, the gentry, and heads of the Church. By-the-by, who can be the Church? We must consider that."

"Trial by jury, of course, I suppose?" said Lewis.

"Of course. And the general provisions of Magna Charta."

"Tea, coffee, tobacco, and snuff—those are the provisions of shops in the general line."

"Well, I'm getting rather tired of it now," said Mervyn, yawning—"are not you?"

"Taxation," pursued the dignified Fulk, without minding him, "will be pronounced dependent on the joint consent of lords and commons."

"Hear that, Mervy!" said Lewis—"you won't lose your three-and-sevenpence-halfpenny unless you like."

"Then I certainly shall not like," said Mervyn. "When am I going to have my thousand pounds?"

"When we've passed the Bill of Rights," said Fulk, which made Lewis laugh till he coughed so badly that silence was imposed. And as lights were now brought in, Fulk languidly took up a book, while Mervyn prepared to continue a series of original designs, in a nice little drawing-book his mamma had given him; and was rather surprised to find that that wag, Lewis, had been writing under his pictures titles by no means apposite. Thus, "A Scene during the late War" was inscribed under a man with an umbrella. "Know your own mind," designated three poplars. "Sunshine—storm coming on," described a pump and a bucket; while a little girl carrying a baby was called "Warriors reposing."

Mervy meditated how he should pay him out.

CHAPTER II.

"AMY," said Mervyn to the nurse who was tucking him up in bed, "I am going to have a thousand pounds."

"Indeed, sir? When you come of age, I suppose?"

"No, when they pass the Bill of Rights."

"Who is to pass that, sir? I remember hearing a good deal of the Reform Bill, but I never heard of the Bill of Rights."

"Ah," said Mervyn, laughing, "I'm afraid it's only some of Lewis's gammon—he *will* make fun of me, you know, sometimes; but this time he said as plainly as could be "he'd give me a thousand pounds."

"Ah, sir, depend on it it was only Master Lewis's fun."

"Yes, I dare say it was; only it would be very nice, wouldn't it, to have a thousand pounds?"

"I believe you, sir."

"Amy, what should *you* do if you had a thousand pounds?"

"Dear me, sir—why, what curious questions you do ask! I should leave service, for one thing."

"Don't you like being a servant, then?"

"I should like not being one better."

"Well, but what would you do then?"

"Good night, Master Mervyn, go to sleep."

"Amy, stop! I can't go to sleep if you don't tell me. I shall lie awake thinking of it."

"Dear me, Master Mervyn, how curious you are. I'll think it over and tell you in the morning."

"Mind you do, then," said Mervyn, as she shut the door.

Before Mrs. Howard went to bed, she came to Mervyn's bedside to give him some cough mixture, while Amy held the candle. He could hardly open his dazzled eyes, but, getting a glimpse of Amy, he said, "Well, have you thought?"

She could hardly help laughing, and said, "No, sir."

However, in the morning, when he asked her again, she said it was very silly asking such questions—it set people on wishing for what they had not, and being discontented with what they had, but that if she had a thousand pounds she would certainly have a nice house of her own, with a girl to do the dirty work, and a boy to go of errands; and her father should not need to be afraid of the workhouse, but should sit in the parlour all day, and have nourishing things to eat, and good clothes to wear, and somebody to teach him the blind alphabet, and how to make baskets and amuse himself.

Mervyn was very much struck with this. He said, "He had had no idea what a good use she would make of the money; and he wished she had it."

"Oh, no!" Amy said; "there was no need to do that; it was wrong to wish for what we could not have, and she was very contented as she was, and so was her father; only time *did* hang rather heavy on his hands, now he could not see, as Master Mervyn would understand if he would only shut his own eyes for a little while."

Mervyn shut his eyes for about two minutes, and came to the

conclusion that it must be very dull work indeed, when for life. He tried to walk to the door with his eyes shut, but hit himself against the wall.

"It's a bad job for your father, Amy," said he. "What are those blind letters you were talking of?"

"I've never seen them, sir, but I believe they're very clever."

"They must be very large," said Mervyn, "for a blind man to see."

"Oh, sir, a blind man could not see them, whether large or small."

"Oh no, to be sure! I forgot that; not unless he could see a very little bit."

"They are raised, sir, so that he feels them; only I don't know their shapes."

"Why shouldn't the usual shapes do as well as any others?"

Amy could not tell, and advised him to ask his mamma. So at breakfast-time Mervyn asked Mrs. Howard why the blind alphabet should be different from the common one. She explained it to him as well as she could, and ended by saying she had a blind alphabet in her desk, which she would lend him, and then he could amuse himself by learning the feel of the raised letters with his eyes shut. Mervyn afterwards amused himself in this way for hours.

Fulk was very poorly this day. His cough, or, according to himself, his cough mixture, made his head ache violently, so that he could not amuse himself by reading, nor bear any noise. He was very feverish and cross.

When Blanche, his eldest sister, who was a very sweet-tempered girl, said after breakfast, "Mamma, is there anything I can do to help you?" her mother replied, "I think you had better devote yourself to Fulk, and try and make him comfortable."

So Blanche went to him and said, "Would you like me to read to you?"

"I can't bear it," said Fulk, peevishly. "My head is ready to split."

So she sat quite quiet, netting a purse; and presently he said—

"Can't you say something?"

"Oh yes!" replied she, "I was only quiet because I thought you liked it."

"Because I don't want reading, it doesn't follow that I want dead silence."

"No, certainly not. Well, then, I'll talk."

It strangely enough happened that she could think of nothing to say.

"Why, I never knew such a girl," said Fulk, gruffly. "If you can't do anything else, you'd better tell me a story."

"Oh yes!" said Blanche. "What sort of a one?"

"Something original; something composing; something that shall interest one, and quiet a fellow's nerves."

"Once upon a time ——"

"Not too loud. Very well, go on."

"Something classical, or in the Arabian Night's style—or what?"

"Oh, I don't want any of *them*. Something new."

"It must not be old, then?"

"Well, it may be old if it is not hacknied."

"Very well. Now, then, I'll begin once more:—

"THE WONDERFUL WONDER: A HISTORY FULL OF MYSTERY.

"The sun was setting in all its glory on one of the fairest cities of Asia Minor. Will that do?"

"Pretty well; only don't spin out too much. Keep on."

"The city had something the form of a theatre, rising round an oval basin of translucent water, and backed by a semicircle of gently rising hills."

"Well done, Blanche! Keep on. Here, Lewis, you may come in if you like. Blanche is telling a capital story."

"How do you know it will be capital?" muttered Blanche, who was desperately plunging into the depths of her imagination for something to satisfy this sudden demand on it; while Lewis, who had been recently banished for being too noisy, came gingerly in, as if afraid of being sent out again. At his particular wish, Blanche recommenced her story, and then went on fluently as follows:—

"A broad street was carried round the curve of the port, and in a conspicuous part of it stood the forum. On the summit of the citadel, which faced it, was a temple of Mars. At one extremity of the curve was the temple of Mercury; at the other, a majestic palace."

"Is this going to be anything out of Telemachus?" interrupted Lewis, suddenly.

"No, Mr. Whipper-Snapper," said Fulk, impatiently. "Go on, Blanche."

"The evening air, loaded with the fragrance of lemon and myrtle,

gently rippled the sleeping sea and fanned the heavy sails of the anchored vessels. Here and there, a group of mariners might be seen idly conversing; here and there, a solitary fisherman was mending his nets. An indistinct hum arose from the city; but the noise of the busier time of day — was hushed."

"Delightful!" murmured Fulk, as Blanche lagged, and dropped her voice.

"Here and there, a girl slowly returned from the well with her full pitcher gracefully poised on her head; here and there a bee slowly returned to its hive, laden with the honey of Hybla — or — Hymettus."

"Fulk's asleep!" cried Lewis, bursting out laughing.

Fulk immediately hurled a sofa-pillow at him, with the force of a catapult, and then sank back growling.

"What a bore! Go on, Blanche."

"It's too bad of you, Lewis," said Blanche, "to spoil sport in this way. How can I go on?"

"I won't do so again," said Lewis, contritely, "only it was so funny to see Fulk dotting off."

"I wasn't," said Fulk. "Her last words were, 'He met us.'"

"Who met who?" persisted the incorrigible Lewis, laughing.

"You be off, sir. Go to the nursery, if you can't be quiet, or else you'll get the other sofa-cushion. Now then, Blanche."

Blanche, incomparable improvisatrice, proceeded:—

"Two men were ascending the marble steps of the palace. One of them was in deep mourning; the other, who wore the every-day Greek costume, carried a scroll. He was of middle age, not handsome, but looked extremely intelligent. They entered the palace, and passed through its marble halls. Everywhere the light of day was partially excluded, or only admitted through black gauze blinds. Everywhere the attendants were in mourning, and wore the appearance of the deepest woe. As the two personages met them, they only greeted them with dejected looks and heavy sighs. At length they reached a spacious ante-chamber, where numerous courtiers were ranged in formal rows, observing profound silence. One of them, an elderly gentleman, stepped forward, and said in a hushed voice—

" 'You are well come. Follow me.' "

("Why couldn't he have said 'welcome?'" muttered Lewis.)

"He preceded them, on tiptoe, the whole length of the room, and

lifting a heavy black cloth curtain just high enough for them to pass under it, followed them and dropped it behind them. All was darkness and silence.

“‘Who is there?’ said a stifled voice, that made them start.

“‘Madam,’ said the attendant——”

“I know who it is,” interrupted Fulk.

“Please don’t tell, Fulk,” said Lewis imploringly; and Fulk desisted.

“‘Madam,’ said the attendant, ‘here is your architect Pithius, accompanied by the famous Greek sculptor Scopus, who attends your orders.’”

“‘It does not signify,’ said the Queen, in a dejected voice——”

(“I knew it was her,” muttered Fulk.)

“‘——Let everything be as handsome as possible——something that shall astonish the whole world——something that shall endure for ages——something that shall commemorate the greatest woe that ever was known. I leave the details to you.’”

Lewis, with great awe in his face, here inquired under his breath——

“Is it Queen Victoria?”

“No, certainly not,” said Fulk. “Don’t tell him, Blanche. Go on.”

“‘Madam,’ said the architect, ‘I will be as brief as possible in running over my scheme. It is too dark here, I am afraid, for you to see the ground-plan which I hold in my hand. I design it to represent a peristyle building——’”

(“What’s a peristyle?” put in Lewis.)

“‘——surmounted by a pyramid, with a chariot group at the top. The whole to be of the finest Parian marble.’

“‘Good,’ said the Queen; ‘and in the chariot let there be a figure of Mausolus, with Victory at his side. Let all the Greek refinement be added to all the Asiatic magnificence.’

“‘That be *my* care,’ cried Scopus.”

“Oh, I know now!” exclaimed Lewis. “It’s Artemisia!”

“Just so, Mr. Marplot,” said Fulk; “any one could tell that, after the mention of Mausolus. But please now to say no more till Blanche has ended her story. Well; and so ——?”

“Well; and so,” pursued Blanche more rapidly, “the most beautiful mausoleum that ever was made was constructed, occupying a quadrangular area of a hundred and twenty-seven feet in length, by a

hundred and eight in breadth, and founded on massive blocks of greenstone."

"Blanche," exclaimed Fulk, "how you must have crammed to get up all this!"

"Of course," said Blanche, with composure. "I had to write a theme about it."

"Oh!"

"And besides," said Lewis, "we don't know that all her figures are right."

"They *are*, though, Master Incredulous. Am I to go on or not?"

"Well, yes; only don't make it too dry."

"The mausoleum was of fabulous beauty—it became one of the seven wonders of the world. It was surrounded by thirty-six marble pillars, and between the pillars were sculptured groups of exquisite beauty. There was a beautiful frieze, too, sculptured with men and horses. And there were flights of marble steps. And here King Mausolus was buried with all the grandeur conceivable. But before his tomb could be finished, poor Artemisia died of grief."

"Poor Artemisia!" said Fulk. "So there's the end."

"No," said Blanche. "Something very romantic is coming. Long ages afterwards, when the Turks were going to attack Rhodes, some Knights of St. John were charged with the repair of the fortifications. They went to Halicarnassus for materials, and finding certain steps of white marble which rose in the form of a terrace, they thought they would make excellent lime, so they broke them up and burned them for that purpose."

"What Goths!" exclaimed Fulk.

"Finding the materials good," continued Blanche, "they continued to dig lower and lower down to obtain more. One afternoon, after they had thus laboured for four or five days, and made a deep excavation, they saw an opening, as if into a cellar. Taking a candle, they let themselves down into this opening, and found that it led into a fine large square hall, ornamented all round with columns of marble; and the spaces between the columns were inlaid with marbles of different colours, and sculptured all over with figures and histories, battle-scenes, and so forth. These silly Knights of St. John, having duly admired this beautiful hall, actually broke it up to supply themselves with building materials. But first, I should tell you, they



THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN DISCOVERING THE TOMB OF MAUSOLUS.

pursued their discoveries, and passed through a very low door into another apartment serving as a kind of ante-chamber, where was a sepulchre, doubtless of Mausolus, with a vase and a helmet of marvellous lustre upon it. Instead of prosecuting their researches, like sensible men, the Knights of St. John went away—to get their supper perhaps—and returned the next day to examine a little more. But alas! in the meantime pirates who had been watching them had entered the sepulchre, and the knights found the tomb broken open and empty, and the ground all around strewn with fragments of cloth of gold and gold spangles with which the body of Mausolus might have been decorated; the body itself, and probably much treasure, had disappeared.”

“Served them right,” said Fulk; “they did not deserve to find it.”

“But what a pity that such a wonderful place should have been destroyed,” said Lewis.

“That comes of ignorance,” said Blanche. “They did not know how to value it.”

“Why don’t we build such places now?”

“Because we can’t.”

“Why can’t we?”

“Because we have not enough imagination.”

“Well, that’s curious,” said Lewis. “Do you think people are born different? They have the same kind of faces—haven’t they the same brains?”

“How do you know they have the same kind of faces?” said Fulk.

“From coins.”

Fulk having no reply ready, Lewis triumphantly added “Aha!”

“When we were little,” said Blanche, “did not we use to fancy all sorts of things in the fire—mountains and caverns and burning cities?”

“Yes, to be sure,” said Lewis, “and in the veins of the marble chimney-piece. Why, the nursery chimney-piece is drawn all over with pencillings that nurse thinks too clever to wash off—Turks fighting, Swiss peasants climbing rocks, and eagles hanging over dead sheep, and all sorts.”

“I don’t suppose papa and mamma ever see such things in the marble or in the fire; do you?” said Blanche.

“No, I should think not,” said Lewis, considering. “They might if they tried, I suppose, but they turn their minds to other things.”

"And better things," said Blanche. "And so with the world in general. It produces railways, and electric telegraphs, and cotton-spinning machines, and steam ploughs; but it does not invent beautiful dreamy things as it did when it was young."

This was said very quietly and slowly; and Lewis, after a glance at Fulk, gave Blanche a knowing look, and sat down to make a fly for fishing. Fulk had settled into a nap.

THE COUSINS AND THEIR FRIENDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SYDNEY GREY," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. BLUEBEARD'S KEY.

MAGDA found that it is easier to make up one's mind not to trouble oneself about a thing than to secure that one shall not be troubled, more especially when the thing one wants to forget is an equivocation or concealment of which one has been guilty. She wished several times that she had given her father and Beatrice *quite* a true account of what had happened during their absence that first evening, for afterwards it seemed as if every one were bent on asking questions or making remarks that forced her (almost without her knowing what she was doing, she fancied) to support the first concealment by manœuvres that savoured more and more of direct untruth. In the morning, Hugh seemed to have forgotten all about the desk and the accident, but as they were going down to tea in the evening, he turned round and stopped her on the stairs, with Tommy close behind, and said loud enough, Magda feared, to be heard in the dining-room, "Oh, by the way, what did Bee say to us for smashing her desk? I hope she was not vexed with you for opening it. Shall I go in and tell her I am sorry I let you get the paper for me? I don't think I ought to have done so."

"Oh no, no! pray not now, with papa there," said Magda quickly.

"Why not, while I think of it?" said Hugh.

Ratcliffe, who had been standing at the bed-room door, here came fluttering up to the foot of the staircase mimicking Mademoiselle's manner when she was a little put out. "My dear shildren," he gabbled, "am I to tell you continual that your goot papa do not approve that so noisy words should be dropped for ever on the stair? Let me entreat of you to enter quiet for some teas."

Tommy's loud laugh over this speech brought the Sergeant from the dining-room, with a request that they would all go in to tea, and be quiet for the rest of the evening, if they could.

Magda was relieved to see Hugh take up a book at tea-time and become so absorbed in it that all recollection of Beatrice and the desk seemed to pass out of his head. She resolved to be beforehand with Hugh in her explanation with Beatrice, but no favourable opportunity of introducing the subject offered itself that evening, and when two or three days had passed over it seemed almost impossible to recur to it. Beatrice would then think it such a strange confession, and perhaps ask more searching questions about Magda's motives for keeping the desk open than she would like to have to answer.

Meanwhile the boys brought more or less anxious faces home with them from school on the days of the trials. Ratty was taking more pains to cut a good figure than usual, or else there was some other cause for his gravity and silence, for certainly such a time of comparative peace and quiet had never before been known in the Lords' school-room. Their crusty next-door neighbour was so surprised at the cessation of the evening racket, that he stopped Mr. Sergeant Lord in the street one day to hope that none of his young people were ill. Kathey did not at all enjoy the novel state of things, for Ratcliffe forsook her company, or when he did condescend to talk with her over school matters, and calculate his own and Hugh's chances of removes or prizes, he invariably worked himself up into such a contradictory mood that even Kathey's good temper was sorely tried. When she ventured to express her hope, that since he was now working so hard he would get his remove after all, or even please and surprise his father by winning a prize, he insisted vehemently that he did not care whom he pleased, and that he had a great deal rather see his name at the bottom of the list than be called up for a prize: but when, in hope of pleasing him, Kathey argued that, since no one expected him to get

prizes, he was perhaps quite right not to dispute them with Hugh, who cared so very much for having them, he turned round, and wondered, snappishly, what business Kathey had to suppose that Hugh cared more for prizes than any one else. It was a nice state of things, indeed, he said, that old Ward should be making out to his father that he could get his remove if he liked, and that every one else should be making out that he could not,—just for nothing in the world, he supposed, but that they might make a horrid fuss, and badger him out of his life, if he did chance to succeed.

On the day before the prize-giving, the boys having come home earlier than usual, and in the excitable fractious humour that generally possessed them on that evening of suspense, Magda slipped away from the school-room to the drawing-room, and asked leave to bring her Tasso and her dictionary to study her last Italian lesson there. "I don't mind noise if it is only noise," she said, "but Hugh will expect me to do nothing this long afternoon but count up his marks and talk over all the mistakes that he and Burnet and Grant may or may not have made in their compositions. Boys are so selfish, and never can understand that one has anything of importance to do oneself when *they* don't chance to be busy. If you will let me settle myself in the corner of the sofa here I shall do beautifully. I don't suppose any people will call this afternoon, and if they do I shan't mind."

Beatrice was not at all sure that *she* should not mind, for however beautifully Magda might *do* crouched up in the corner of the sofa, she certainly would not *look* beautiful, with her hair in its afternoon state of disorder, her apron awry, and her shoulders stuck up to her ears. Beatrice was, however, too good-natured to make any objection, and not sufficiently accustomed to exercise authority over the sister next in age to herself to like to send Magda upstairs again to make herself tidy. She only occasionally cast uneasy glances at the strange heap on the sofa into which Magda had made herself, and paused now and then in the long letter she was writing to Cyril, to consider how best she could word a remonstrance which, when the Italian lesson was completed, she meant to make to Magda on her desertion of the school-room on that particular afternoon.

Beatrice thought over the old days when she and Cyril had discussed together his chances of getting a prize, and wondered rather sorrowfully that Magda should have chosen to waste a whole hour in the morning,

searching for a missing number of a magazine story in which she was interested, instead of getting forward with her business, so as to be at leisure when Hugh was sure to want her. Before long, Beatrice's letter had another interruption. Tommy suddenly burst into the drawing-room, slammed the door, and proceeded to drag a chair to the table, and settle himself by Beatrice's side.

"It was very horrid upstairs, and he could not stay there any longer," he said, in explanation of his intrusion. "Hugh and Ratty were so cross, they would not let him alone—they had been chasing him about, and flapping their handkerchiefs at him, only because he wanted to water the nursery carpet with real water from his watering-can, and he was sure the nursery wanted watering, for Ratty had been stamping about till it was quite as dusty as the real road. Since Magda was allowed to come down, might not he?"

Beatrice remembered that the post to India went out next day, and sighed for her letter; but seeing that Tommy did look heated and irritated, and on the verge of one of the interminable fits of crying that were so bad for him, she put her pen down, and began to look for some quiet occupation in which he might recover his good humour. "I will tell you what you shall do for me," she said, pleasantly: "I will give you the envelopes of all the letters we have had from dear Cyril since he left us, and you shall cut out the foreign stamps very carefully. I should not like even the envelopes of his letters to be destroyed, and we have promised the stamps to Arthur Mannering."

Magda had hardly noticed Tommy's entrance, but the mention of Cyril's letters caught her ear, and awoke a very uncomfortable apprehension in her mind.

Oh dear, she thought, if I had but mentioned the upset of the desk at once! What will Beatrice think if it comes out now? "If I were you, dear Bee, I would not trouble to look for Cyril's letters now; it will hinder your writing so," she said, without looking up from her dictionary.

"No, it will only take a moment. I have them all here in my desk drawer," said Beatrice—"if I can only draw the pin out. What can make it stick so fast?"

Magda persisted in not looking up, and the next thing she heard was a loud and sorrowful exclamation from Beatrice over the state of the papers in her drawer. "How can they possibly have got so stained with

ink?" she said aloud. "They were quite clean a fortnight ago when I took them out to read some of the early ones over again to papa, and now here is a packet that looks as if it had lain in a pool of ink; some of the letters will be almost illegible, I fear. Oh dear, how sorry I am!"

Magda fluttered the leaves of her dictionary as fast as she could, and began to murmur some lines of the canto she was translating above her breath, half pretending, and half really trying not to hear.

"Magda, do leave your book for one moment, and come here," said Beatrice, in an aggrieved tone. "How do you think this can have happened?"

Magda approached the table slowly, and began to turn over the ink-stained letters, wondering what excuse she could put forth first for her long silence, and feeling uncomfortably conscious that Tommy's small grey eyes were fixed intently upon her. Just as she opened her mouth to speak, Bee, who had been examining the desk carefully, looked up with an expression of great relief on her kind face. "Oh, I am so glad!" she said. "I understand now—there is a crack across the bottom of the ink-glass. The ink must have oozed out and dropped through this crevice into the drawer. I must have cracked my glass without knowing it; I do take it out sometimes. Oh, I see, the wood-work of the desk is stained too! Well, it is provoking, but I am glad I know how the mischief was done; I should have been much displeased if I had thought that either of the boys or Kathey had meddled with my desk, the only thing of my own that I am particular about, as you know, Magda."

"Yes, I know—hem—no—I mean I did not know you were so very particular about it," stammered Magda, hiding her crimson face by bending over to look at the glass. She thought when she began to speak that she was going to add something else, but the words did not come. After all, she reflected, what was the use of vexing Beatrice now that the thing was done? It should not happen again, Magda was determined, so where was the need of speaking about it?

"I see that my ivory key label is spotted with ink too," said Bee, presently; "I wonder I did not notice it before."

"Oh, that will rub off easily!" said Magda; and she stretched out her hand for the ring, walked away with it to the table where the gold-fish globe stood, and seemed to give her whole mind to the busi-

ness of rubbing the ink stain from the ivory with the corner of her handkerchief. Tommy dragged his chair across the room to where she stood, mounted it, and looked eagerly over her shoulder. "Will it come off? can you get it off?" he asked, almost breathlessly.

"To be sure I can," said Magda. "Do get down. What business is it of yours?"

"Oh! I want to see," cried Tommy—"I want to see whether or not the stain will come out on the other side."

Magda handed the key back to Beatrice, but Tommy snatched it from her hand and turned it round and round eagerly. "No, it's not there; it has not come out in a fresh place," he said.

"What do you mean, Tommy?" asked Beatrice, surprised.

"Oh, nothing," he answered, suddenly turning sulky. "I ain't a sneak, though Ratty says I am. I only thought it might be like the stain on Mrs. Bluebeard's key, that's all."

"But, my dear child, how foolish of you!" said Bee, who was often somewhat puzzled by the odd way in which Tommy, who generally passed for being so sensible, would sometimes apply his favourite fairy tales, so that it was impossible to know whether he actually believed them or not.

Magda went back to her dictionary, but could not get out of her head all the rest of the evening a sort of half recollection, which now struck her for the first time, of having seen a little white figure, upright, instead of lying flat, on Tommy's bed, when she had gone to Bee's room to take back the desk key. Tommy slept in Beatrice's room, but as he had gone to bed a full hour before the fracas in the drawing-room began, no one had thought of his knowing anything about it. He made no allusion to what had passed between him and Magda during tea-time; it was not Tommy's way to talk at tea-time; but when he wished Magda good night in the drawing-room, he gave her an extra hug, half affectionate, half teasing. Tommy had a sort of fellow feeling with Magda, because she, like himself, preferred to be let alone. "Good night, Mrs. Bluebeard," he whispered; "I am glad that the stain did not come out on the other side, and I hope it won't before to-morrow morning. I will look while I am dressing, and let you know."

"Go away, do," said Magda crossly. "I don't like to hear you talk such nonsense."

"Nonsense! why it was you told me the story of Mrs. Bluebeard's key yourself," cried Tommy, indignantly; and Magda, in dread of further explanation, felt relieved when the drawing-room door was at last safely shut behind the "terrible child."

CHAPTER VIII.

SUSPENSE.

"WELL, BOYS!" the Sergeant said, putting down his book, when Hugh and Ratcliffe came to wish him good night. "To-morrow will be a very busy day with me, but I think I could snatch an hour to look in at the school while the prizes are being given away, if I make a great push. Shall I come or not?"

Hugh hesitated. "You must not expect it to be like last year, father," he said, "when Cyril got everything, and the boys all applauded him so. I don't know that we shall either of us get prizes this year, and if I do, I am not a favourite with every one as Cyril was. However, whatever happens, I should like to have you there."

"That's right, Hugh; and you, Ratcliffe?"

Ratty looked so bewildered and almost frightened when his father turned to him, that the Sergeant, instead of waiting for an answer, hastened to add some reassuring words. "Whether I go or stay away you may be sure of one thing, Ratcliffe, that I shall not be unreasonable in my expectations; all I care for is to be assured that you have done your best, or even tried honestly at times to do your best. I am not at all set on your either of you getting prizes. I enjoyed dear Cyril's success last year, but chiefly because I felt it was so fairly earned, and knew that he was too generous and simple-minded to be the least injured by his popularity. If you and Hugh will only cultivate Cyril's sweet open temper, I won't quarrel with you for not getting so many prizes as he did."

Hugh was almost as much out of spirits when they got upstairs as was Ratcliffe. He threw himself on the bed without undressing, and rolled over and over in a paroxysm of vexation. "Father might just as well expect you to win prizes as me to be as good-tempered as Cyril," he groaned. "I know he meant me, though he looked at you. It's too bad! as if one could be sweet-tempered when things are all going on so horribly. Oh dear, how happy we all were this day last year! You, and I, and Cyril in this room—and what jolly holidays we looked forward to!"

"But we did not have them," said Ratty; "and I'll tell you what, Hugh—you were not jolly even this day last year. You threw yourself on the ground, and went on about not getting your remove, just as badly as you are doing now. Cyril laughed at you, and you made such a row that mother came in to see that we were not quarrelling."

"Hold your tongue, can't you?" said Hugh, almost savagely; but after that he lay still thinking a long time. Yes, he remembered it all now; he *had* spoilt one of the last bright evenings they might have spent together by his perverse discontent. He remembered how grave his mother had looked when she saw the state of excitement into which he had worked himself up, and how Cyril's bright spirits had been checked by his determination to expect nothing but disappointment for them both. The recollection was very painful to Hugh, but he was honest-hearted enough to acknowledge to himself that, since he had made himself unhappy when there was no real cause for sorrow, a great deal of his present gloom might be of his own creating. He had no doubt that his father and Beatrice felt the blanks in the house far more than he did, yet in how different a spirit they bore their sorrow! He resolved to be more good-tempered for the future, and try to look on the bright side. That was a harder task to Hugh than any amount of school work; but when he thought of his mother's face, and of some sacred words she had said to him on that night last year, as she wished him good night, he was ashamed of the little effort he had been making lately to conquer his besetting fault of temper, and did not rise from his knees till he had put up a more real petition for strength to fight against his faults than he had ever offered before.

It was a good deal later than usual when Hugh put out the candle, but Ratcliffe, though he had tumbled into his bed half an hour before, was still wide awake. He propped himself up with his elbows on the pillow, as if he had been waiting to begin to talk till it was dark. "I say, Hugh," he began, "you don't care about getting that rotten Latin composition prize, do you? It is not one of the regular prizes, you know; and it's nothing but a fad of old Ward's giving one to our form. Like him, to have such a stupid notion."

Hugh's philosophy was a good deal shaken by this remark. "What have you heard—who do you think will get the verse prize? Burnot says he does not think he has done his verses well, but perhaps he was trying to cram me."

"Oh! I don't know anything about Burnet's verses; there are other fellows can write verses besides just yourself and Burnet. Suppose it should be some one low down in the form who wins; that sort of thing happens sometimes."

"Oh bother! what's the use of putting it in my head?" said Hugh. "It's not a bit likely. You don't fancy you are going to get the prize yourself, surely?"

Ratliffe's head subsided suddenly into the pillow. "Well," he muttered, "I only wanted to know that you were not such an ass as to care about it. You've had such lots of prizes, you need not grudge one to another fellow for once, surely."

Hugh was silent for a minute or two, and then answered in a gentler tone than was usual with him, "I don't think I should have grudged it to you, Ratty; I wish with all my heart you had been taking pains with your compositions all the year, and could hope to get it. But I am afraid you must not expect it; you have not a chance."

"I don't want the prize," said Ratty, vehemently. "I wish spiteful old Ward had never thought of giving one. I wish I had never sent a composition in. I hate the thought of it all. I wish to-morrow was over."

"So do I," said Hugh, sighing; "but, Ratty, it will be a great deal worse for father than for us. How he will think of last year, and miss mamma and Cyril. I wish I had not asked him to come to the school. I don't feel just now as if I cared at all about the prizes; but I hope nothing will happen to vex father."

There had been some talk of the girls going to the school-house to see the prizes given away with their aunt, Mrs. Walter Lord, but the morning's post brought a note from her to say that she had an engagement which would prevent her taking charge of them. Somehow or other, no one but Kathleen and the Sergeant felt particularly disappointed by the news.

The boys did not set off for the school-house till twelve o'clock; and as Mademoiselle had been requested to give the younger girls a holiday, it was to every one in the house a somewhat unsettled, idle day. Magda, whose curiosity had been revived by the sight of a thick letter from Aunt Lucy, which their father had received during breakfast, talked incessantly about the new plans, first to Hugh and Ratcliffe, and, when they had left the house, to Kathleen and Tommy for want of

better auditors. Kathleen did not listen as complacently as usual. She had had some scruples about listening to Magda's conjectures ever since the evening when she had seen her peep into Aunt Lucy's letter. She felt as if she were sharing information not quite fairly come by.

At five o'clock, Kathleen stationed herself at the dining-room window to watch for the first glimpse of her father and the boys returning. "I shall know exactly what has happened the instant they turn the corner of the square," she said to Magda; "I remember how it was last year; I did not go, because I had a cold; but I waited here and saw you all driving up the street. How happy you all looked! Ratty had not got his remove, to be sure, but he did not seem to mind, and there was so much good news to be heard about the other two. I know it can't be as good to-day; but I hope poor Hugh won't be disappointed, and that Mr. Ward won't have said anything to papa to make him displeased with Ratty. That's what I'm most anxious about; for I am afraid Ratty has got into a way of hurrying over things, and not minding, since Cyril left. I am just as bad myself, I know."

"We have all been rather careless lately, I am afraid," said Magda, rather gravely. "I was thinking only this morning that we were none of us going on what mamma would call well. Hugh is crosser than ever, and Ratty twice as difficult to manage in the school-room. Made-moiselle has taken to finding fault more often than she used to do, too; and things seem, somehow, to have a way of getting wrong they never had last year. That is why I am so very glad we are likely to have a thorough change soon. It is so easy to begin well with new people in a new place, that everything is sure to be right when we once get away. I should be quite unhappy about ourselves if we were going to remain here in London."

"I wonder whether we shall all be much better directly we get to Caergebi; you know we shall be *ourselves* there," said Kathleen, thoughtfully. "I wish I might talk to Beatrice about it."

"But you must not, indeed, till she begins," said Magda, anxiously; "and besides, if I chose, I could tell you almost everything there is to hear."

But Kathleen took her station at the window, and would not let herself be drawn on to ask further questions.

[To be continued.]

THE ANIMALS OF PARIS.

(From the French of Jean Macé.)

“**W**HERE do you come from, poor limping dapple-grey horse?”
 “I come from Paris, my little friend.”

“What can you tell me about Paris?”

“Oh, I know it well. I was an omnibus horse there, trotting from morning to night up and down the Boulevards. It is a splendid city; nevertheless, take my advice, don't go there. One gets so terribly knocked about. Crowds hurrying along without ceasing, carriages one after the other without end; mud as much as you please; flogging a good deal more. Such is life in Paris. I call it a place of torment.”

“Where do you come from, beautiful cooing wood-pigeon?”

“I come from Paris, little friend.”

“Did you get terribly knocked about in Paris?”

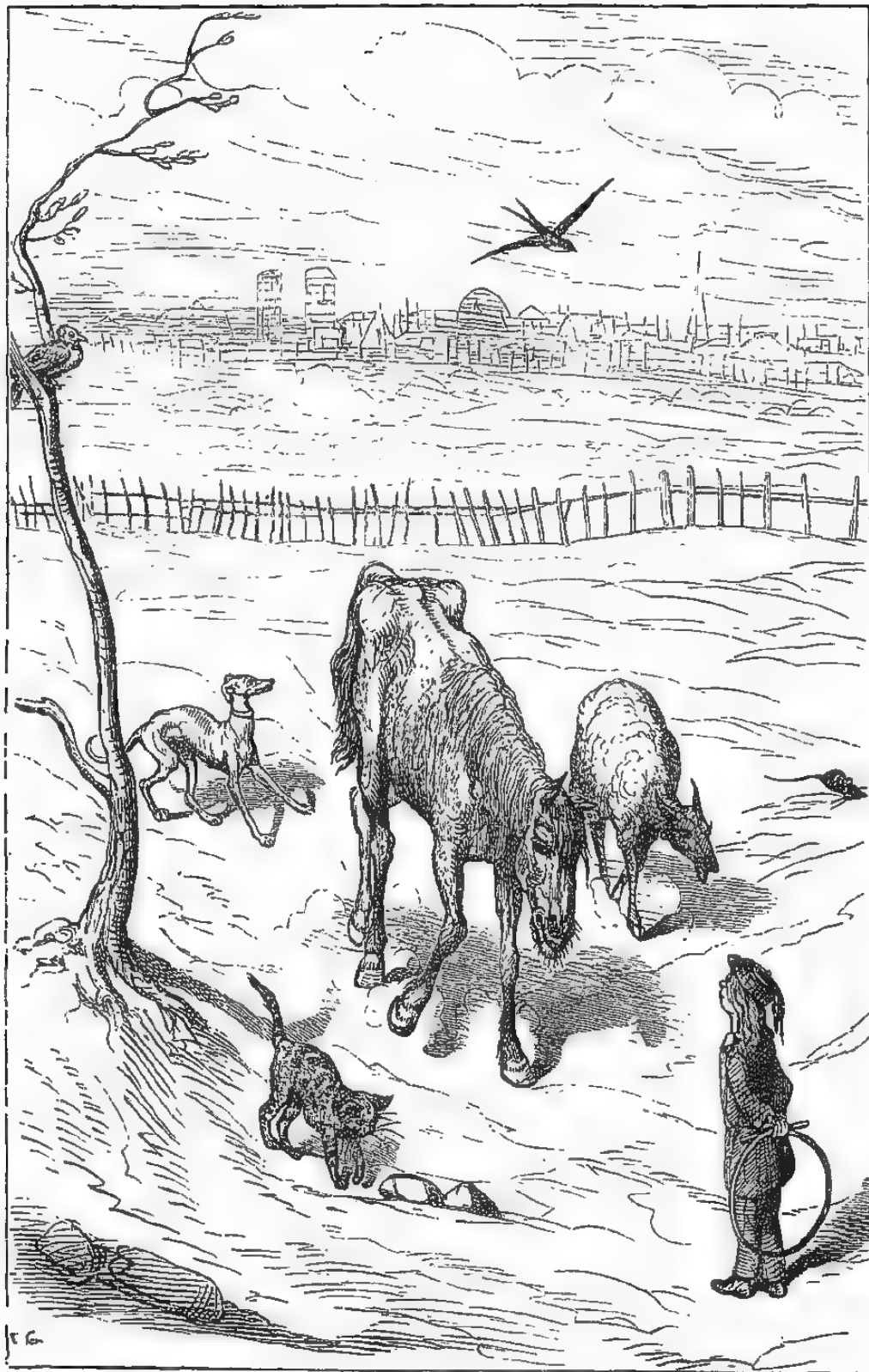
“What a question! I know Paris better than anybody. I am a pigeon from the Tuileries, and it is the most delicious, peaceful spot that can be seen. There you have shade and freedom together. Fine woods, but no hawks, sportsmen or bird-nesters. Lovely children dancing and laughing. Ladies who walk about in robes more brilliant than the rainbow; polite gentlemen who go away in the evening, and leave you the whole night for sleep. Such is Paris. I call it a paradise.”

“Where do you come from, bleating so, kind white sheep?”

“I come from Paris, my little friend.”

“People are very happy at Paris, are they not?”

“What a question! I am still trembling all over from what I have gone through there. I, a poor country-bred sheep, who was so charmed to come up and see the capital! Picture to yourself men in red jackets, with large glittering knives in their hands, and bare arms stained with blood up to the elbow; huge dogs which frighten one even to look at, and horrible iron hooks, by which murdered animals



"WHERE DO YOU COME FROM, POOR LIMPING
DAPPLE-GREY HORSE?"

are hung up, head downwards. They would have cut my throat too, I'm quite sure, if I had not managed to run away. So I must bid you good-bye. They're perhaps coming after me now."

"Where do you come frisking from, you pretty fawn-coloured greyhound?"

"I come from Paris, my little friend."

"Have you been very much frightened in Paris?"

"What a question! I know Paris to a hair's breadth. I am a greyhound from quite the west end. What in the world is there to be afraid of? One lies upon velvet and silk cushions; one is fondled all day by little white hands as soft as satin itself. If one goes out it is in a carriage, and Parisian carriages are as luxurious as easy chairs. If one puts foot to the ground it is to step along fine gravel walks. Always something to eat, never anything to do; who could possibly find fault with Paris? But now, farewell; my dear mistress may be getting uneasy at my absence."

"Where do you come from, purring so loud, you great furry cat?"

"I come from Paris, my little friend."

"People do nothing at Paris, I suppose?"

"What an idea to be sure! But I am just the one to put you right. I am the puss of an editor, whose house is the resort of all Paris worth speaking about, and you may take my word for it there is plenty to be done there. If the hands are at rest the brain works hard enough, I assure you. But what a pleasure to rub oneself day by day against people of sense, men of letters, authors, artists, whose names are everywhere known, and these people all make a pet of me. It is partly because I am very handsome, no doubt, for in that part of the world all beauty commands attention."

"Where do you come from, little nibbling grey mouse?"

"I come from Paris, little friend."

"Beauty is the great attraction of life there, is it not?"

"What are you talking about? I am from the heart of the city

myself,—I who speak to you now. I am a mouse from the pawnbrokers' quarter. And there's something else to be done there, believe me, besides thinking about beauty; a pretty sort of living it would be else! One has to work there all day long in shops where appearance is never thought about, but one gets on very well, nevertheless. I am going into the country now, fattened for life. I had never been out of my hole before, and I have just crossed Paris for the first time. Ah, what an immense place it is, my dear child! One should have to be on the trot all one's life if one wanted to see everything."

"Where are you flying from, swallow with the dark grey wings?"

"I have just passed over Paris, my little friend."

"An immense place, is it not?"

"Ah, you think so? Well, one can see as one looks down that it stands on more room than other towns, but what is that to a swallow? It only took me three minutes to leave all that mass of stones and human beings behind me. I have seen the Alps. I have seen the sea. That is immense, if you please. Among all the houses yonder there is not one I would build my nest upon, but I know of a little tiled roof in a village, under whose eaves I am expected. The gnats dance all round it, and the housewife rejoices to see me arrive. Stay where you are, my child, and don't trouble yourself about Paris. There is nothing there half as sweet as the breeze that blows straight to you from heaven."

Ed.

THE PRINCE OF SLEONA.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER III.

THE JOURNEY TO THE BLACK CASTLE.

EARLY in the morning the priest aroused Loroio, that they might eat and drink before commencing their journey. The hound was to be left at the temple, and it was strange to see how the noble dog seemed to comprehend that this was to be the case. He kept eyeing

his master earnestly, but at the same time deigned, in a manner quite unusual with him, to receive the caresses and attentions of two boy-priests to whose care he was specially to be entrusted. When it was time to depart, the prince kissed him and fondled him with tears in his eyes. The dog was the last link with his old home and life except, indeed, the lute, which hung behind him by a chain which Lady Elmona had worn, had taken from her neck, and fastened to the instrument. And he felt that perhaps he never might return, or that, should he do so, the dog might be dead or lost. The dog caressed his master, as dogs will do at such a time, with an evident weight at his heart, as if he clearly saw before him the prospect of the long weary days to be spent before he should be with him again. They tied him by a strong chain, and the boys placed food before him, of which he took no notice. So Loroio and the priest passed out of the temple, and were descending the hill towards the boat in which they were to begin the journey. But they had not gone far when the dog came rushing to the outer gate, dragging the broken chain, and followed by his two attendants, who vainly tried to keep him back. And when he reached the gate, he came no farther, but sat down there and gazed after his master till he was out of sight, on which he went slowly back to the room where they had passed the night, and laid himself down there, resigned but inconsolable.

After a pleasant journey of a couple of days in their boat up a beautiful river, on the morning of the third day the priest pointed to a ridge of fantastically peaked mountains on the horizon, and on the spur of one of them could be seen what appeared to be a great rock. This was the site of the Black Castle. It was a very conspicuous landmark, for the intervening country was flat, though plentifully wooded, and the prince thought there could be little difficulty in making his way to it. Here the priest bade him a kind farewell, and his parting words were emphatically spoken :—

“Always remember, whatever obstacles you may meet with, face them boldly, and march straight upon them by the most direct way. Follow this advice, and I doubt not that all will go well with you, and that we shall meet again in happiness. When you return, be your luck good or bad, you will come to me.”

Loroio now started across the flat country, in as straight a line as he could, for the Black Castle. It was generally hidden from him by the

woods through which his track lay, but from time to time he caught sight of it, and could satisfy himself that he was keeping in the right direction. Being but weak and ill, he did not go far in a day, but stopped to pass the nights at the villages, or detached farmhouses. He was always most kindly and politely received, for hospitality was universally practised by the inhabitants, and in return for their reception he would play and sing for them, which never failed to give pleasure and delight. At length, one morning, he found, or thought, that he was getting pretty near to the Black Castle, which the nature of the country had prevented his seeing for some time. The rock on which it was built rose steep and sheer, on the side of a hill; and now he could see its black walls, black as the rock itself, and its roofs, which seemed to be of some metal of a deep reddish copper hue. But it was still, in reality, a long way off, and between him and it was a deep and extensive valley, with a broad river flowing through it. He passed through the valley, feeling elate with hope at his apparent nearness to the termination of this first part of his journey. After crossing the river by a ferry, of which the ferryman was a strange, silent man, who only spoke in monosyllables, and was altogether unlike his courteous and talkative countrymen, he entered upon a wild and desolate region. No more villages were to be seen, and soon even the cottages were all left behind. He was upon a range of low hills, of uniform appearance, covered with scanty heaths, and when he reached the top of this range, and began to descend the other side, it was getting towards evening. Soon it grew dark. He looked about in hopes of seeing some light which might lead him to a cottage where he could pass the night, but there was none. The sky was veiled in clouds, and a wind arose, and sighed in a melancholy manner athwart the waste. It was a strange wind; quite warm. He felt wretched and uneasy; and yet there seemed nothing for it but to make up his mind to pass the night where he was, as he saw no good in stumbling on further in the dark.

And, as he arrived at this resolution, he suddenly made out that he was within a few inches of something which he took to be a rock or cliff, and which he would have come in contact with had he gone a pace further. Thinking it best to postpone all attempt to ascertain what this obstacle might really be until daylight, he went back a short distance to the shelter of a clump of trees, where he lay down for the

night, although the sighing and wailing of the warm breeze in their branches prevented his falling asleep for a considerable time.

He slept soundly at length, however, and towards morning he was in the full enjoyment of that exquisite and unclouded happiness which we sometimes find in dreams, and, I suppose, in dreams alone, in this world. In his dream he was back in Sleona, its king, standing in the terraced gardens of the palace. By his side was Elmona—for Elmona it was, although her face was somehow hidden and indistinguishable. All his old love for her—so rudely shaken, and so violently torn from his heart on that night when he left her—had come back with more than its former intensity. A certain vague consciousness that there had been some shadow between them—some bitter period of absence, of sorrow and pain, only served to enhance the happiness of the present. She was his queen now. The splendid wedding pageants and ceremonies, which had occupied the entire day, were only just at an end; but they were over—the last guests had departed—sounds of feasting and joy floated up from the illuminated city below. He felt, in his dream, that he had been long, long in misery and exile, that his life had been spent, for some lengthened period, in conflict and trial. Now that was all at an end. He was at home again, restored to his throne, reunited to his dear Elmona; sorrow was over, fate had wearied of shooting her arrows at him, perfect happiness was his at last. Even in the dream, he asked himself, doubting for a moment, “Can this be a dream?” No, it was no dream, but blessed reality.

Suddenly a tumult arose; loud and discordant noises sounded; Elmona’s face grew clear and distinct—not *her* face, however, but a hideous, malignant countenance, with baleful glittering eyes. She laughed a wild and horrible laugh, and at the same moment a bright glare shot up to the sky, growing fiercer and fiercer. The palace was on fire! Wildly shouting an alarm, and striving to hurry from the spot, to which he seemed rooted as if by some spell, the Prince awoke.

The glare was a reality, but it proceeded from the sun, rising, with a red and portentous glow, in the stormy east. He was alone in the waste; some scattered clumps of trees, of a strange, stunted appearance, with long, pendent leaves of a dark green, were the only objects which broke the monotony of the hard, stony moorland, scantily covered with low heath, dry, brown, and seeming only half alive. The wind had

fallen, and everything was profoundly still—not even a bird or an insect broke the silence. And now he could see what the object was with which he had so nearly come in contact in the dark.

It was a high wall, apparently of brass!

It stretched, on either hand, as far as could be seen; too high and smooth to be climbed, no breaks in it, a formidable obstacle indeed. Nevertheless, Loroio, on thinking a little, felt certain that it was the outer wall of the Lord of the Black Castle's domain, and as of course there must be a gate in it somewhere, after refreshing himself with some food from the wallet which he carried, he set out to walk patiently along the inclosure till he should come to the entrance. He walked all that day without coming to any opening; the wall stretched on, uniform and unbroken, up hill and down dale. He could never see over it, but sometimes he got sight of the tops of lofty trees beyond it, and birds were singing in them, and some of them had sweet smelling leaves and blossoms; and once he heard the rushing of a waterfall inside the wall, but could not see it. So he passed another night in the open air, this time under the shelter of a rock; this was a fine night, clear and starlight. The second day he walked on as before, but still with the same result. No gate or opening in the brazen wall. He began to feel very much discouraged, and walked on until it was quite dark, resting the second night in a clump of trees. You may imagine his surprise, when he awoke on the morning of the third day, to find that he had passed the night in the very same clump of trees from which he had originally started. Thus he had gone all round the wall, and there was no opening in it.

He thought of what the priest had told him, about always going straight forward when obstacles were met with. Now he certainly had not tried this plan, but where was the sense of attempting to walk straight through a wall of brass? It seemed a most absurd idea, and it could not have been what was meant, he supposed. Nevertheless, at last he made up his mind to give the plan a trial, though he laughed at himself for even thinking of trying it in this instance. However, nobody would ever know of his folly, so, laughing once more, he turned his face towards the high brass wall, and walked straight at it. No sooner had he fairly touched it than it vanished entirely away!

And now he found himself entering upon a pleasant open country, with clumps of beautiful trees and grassy slopes, watered by clear run-

ning brooks. Deer were feeding quietly among the trees, and merely raised their heads for a moment to look at him with a curiosity unmingled with fear. Bright-eyed conies, and other ground animals, played about in the same fearless manner. Birds of bright plumage were in the trees, and came flying up to examine him. He plucked and tasted some fruits, such as he had never seen before, and drank of the bright water of the brooks; and felt wonderfully refreshed and inspired. There, too, was the Black Castle itself, towering upon its rocks above the trees—some distance off still, certainly, but near enough to make it clear that he should reach it ere long. He was surprised and delighted at the ease with which he had overcome the first great obstacle, and felt confident that by continuing to pursue the same plan he would have similar success should he meet with others. And he soon had an opportunity of putting this to the test, for, by-and-by, he found himself confronted with a thick tangled forest, where huge tree-trunks, and a thick and matted growth of thorny underwood, seemed most effectually to bar his passage; but he advanced to this without a moment's hesitation, and as soon as he touched it, it gave way before him completely, although it did not disappear as the wall had done, but yielded, so as to allow of his passing through, though with some slight difficulty. And now he was in a thick shady wood, which formed a pleasant protection from the sun, which was hot and powerful. The stems of the great trees were covered with creepers, which often interlaced and hung down in graceful festoons overhead; and insects of strange and beautiful forms darted about on shining wings, and made the place alive with their cries. He walked on through this part of the forest for a considerable part of the day, enjoying its shade, and wondering at its beauty, when, all of a sudden, he felt as if the ground gave way beneath his feet, and he fell for some distance, finally alighting unhurt on a deep layer of something which seemed to be leaves. He was in a deep, hidden pit, and in total darkness. Shaken by his fall, and thoroughly taken by surprise, he remained motionless for some time where he had alighted. This event was dreadfully discouraging—happening, too, just as he was getting on so well. He could see literally nothing, the darkness was so profound. The opening, whatever its nature might be, through which he had fallen, had closed up—no ray of light came in from above. He turned round and groped backwards in the dark, soon reaching a slip-

pery, perpendicular wall or cliff—evidently the limit of the pit in that direction. Hopeless to attempt to climb up it back to the light of day, he sat down to reflect on his position. It seemed as unpromising as it well could be. However, sitting still could do no good; that, at least, was clear. He couldn't get out of the pit without trying. But then the question was, what to try? To go forward, according to the golden rule, perhaps. But the idea of marching straight forward, in present circumstances, where one couldn't see where one's foot was to be next planted, was anything but inviting. However, after a long deliberation, he resolved to try it. He set out, accordingly, slowly and with great caution, advancing one foot at a time most carefully, and keeping his weight on the other, feeling the ground sure before setting the foot down. His progress in this way was necessarily slow—he sank, at each step, deep in the soft layer which covered the bottom of the pit. Gradually, however, this became harder, and, though it was still quite dark, he began to move forward with greater ease and confidence, and to increase his pace. All at once his head came in violent contact with something—apparently a rock; the blow half stunned him for a time; but presently, groping with his hands, he found that he had come to a low arch, which he could only pass under by creeping on his hands and knees. Forward he went still, however, in this crawling position, for some little distance, till, raising one arm, he found that the passage was high enough to admit of his walking erect again. The ground now began to slope upwards; he climbed a pretty steep ascent, until, at length, he saw before and above him a star shining! He had never felt such joy as at the sight of this, and made towards it rapidly, soon reaching an opening, through which he passed once more to the upper world.

Many hours had elapsed since he fell into the pit, and when he came to the surface it was night, rather dark, with large masses of soft cloud, the stars shining brightly enough in the spaces between. He was at a considerable elevation, in a wild, bare, and rocky region, which he could only dimly see. Below him he heard the hoarse roaring and rushing of waters not far off. He determined to go no further till morning, and sheltering himself in the hollow of a rock, and quite exhausted by all he had gone through, he fell asleep at once.

The morning light disclosed a scene of wild and desolate grandeur. Rocks of enormous size, and of jagged and rugged outline, were piled

one upon another in all directions, as if by some ancient convulsion of nature. Far, far below, in a deep gorge with precipitous sides, a dark brown torrent was rushing and foaming, its course obstructed by rocks like those above. Two eagles, far overhead, sweeping wildly in their flight, with harsh cries, were the only living things besides himself. Means of crossing to the other side there were none; yet it was clear that cross he must if he were to proceed—there was no other course but to go back into the cavern!

Loroio at last abandoned himself to utter despair. Out of this difficulty there seemed no way. It was hard, it was inexpressibly bitter, to have overcome so many and so great obstacles, and to find himself at length at this hopeless pass. All his resolution abandoned him, and he could not help shedding some tears. But another mood speedily took possession of him. He nerved himself by the thought that, after all, he had done all he could. He had struggled manfully and well, and, since all his efforts had only resulted in this utter discomfiture, it was evident that fate was too strong for him, and that all hope of success, of health, of happiness, was at an end.

“Since it is so,” he said, “I will struggle no longer. I will go forward, since I cannot return, though it is but to my doom. I will advance to that ledge above the torrent, and, closing my eyes, plunge into its depths. What has my life been that I should prize it, or care to continue it? Ere I sink in that whirling pool it will have passed away, and I shall have bidden adieu for ever to this world and all its miseries. This then, oh lying priest! is your promised panacea—this is your miraculous remedy for my ills—this is your fabled tree of healing. And yet I would fain have lived—a *little* longer, at least. But to what end I cannot tell. Away with such thoughts. Here ends my pilgrimage. Sorrows of earth, farewell! Father, Father, I come to you!”

So saying, the Prince advanced at once down the shelving rock, calmly and deliberately, to the ledge which overhung, at a great height, the boiling torrent. Louder and louder rang its hoarse voice in his ear; wildly and more wildly it seemed to eddy and swirl as he approached the fatal edge. In the very act of stepping from the ledge he paused in amazement, for he perceived that the trunks of two enormous trees, rooted about half way up the further side of the stream (which was less precipitous than that on which he stood)—

having apparently been blown down by some mighty wind—were resting in an inclined position right across the river, their top branches reaching to the rock beneath him. His ideas of death took flight at once. In this bridge, perilous as it appeared, he saw a chance of life and escape from his present position. At once, after gratefully thanking Heaven, he proceeded, at great risk, to lower himself down the precipitous face of the cliff by tufts of scanty herbage, which grew there, and at length placed himself safely upon the trees.

The branches upon which he stepped at first were slight and brittle, and bent and cracked beneath his weight; but he clung to them as to his only hope of safety and life, and gained a firmer footing upon the trunks themselves. But it was a dreadful passage, along those two trees, in mid air above the torrent: and the nearer he got to the seething water in his course down the sloping and irregular trunks, the louder became its roar, and the more confusing its wild whirl. And as he advanced, gradually and carefully, he could distinguish, above the deafening din of the water, the sound as of a great wind and storm, surging up towards him rapidly from behind, while the sky above grew darker and darker. He had got a little more than half way across when the storm overtook him and burst upon him in all its violence. A strong wind buffeted him, and made him reel on his giddy bridge—rain fell in blinding sheets—thunder rolled—his senses began to totter; he thought he could hear ill-boding voices calling in exulting tones in a tongue he could not understand. Once he had all but lost his hold and his footing, and fallen into the torrent. But he manfully pushed on. Fiercer blew the wind—more wildly raged the storm—louder roared and crashed the thunder; at length, as he was within a few feet of the land, there came a terrific peal of the loudest thunder, which seemed to shake the rocks—it seemed to his dazzled senses that he heard the voices yelling and shrieking in his very ear—and, as he tottered in the very act of falling, there suddenly played around his head a gleam and flash as of the most brilliant lightning: he thought he saw a great white hand held out to him, and he seized upon this and clung to it with all his might. The two tree-trunks snapped, and fell crashing into the torrent, where they whirled round like straws as they were carried rapidly down out of sight—and he found himself in safety on the shore, clinging fast to

the roots of one of the trees. The storm ceased on the instant—all was quiet. But it was long before Loroio dared to look up or to move. Reassured, however, by the continued silence, and devoutly thanking Heaven for his deliverance, he arose, and climbed to the top of the high bank with very little difficulty.

This great effort proved to be the last he was then called upon to make. Almost immediately he struck into a plain and easy path, which led him the same afternoon to the great object and end of his journey, the wonderful Black Castle. As he came to it, the setting sun was gilding its metal roofs, and lighting up its casements. The rocks on which it was built were precipitous, and at first he could see no way to enter it; but, as he approached, two great stones of irregular shape swung slowly outwards and backwards, and through the doorway (which was surmounted by the inscription "Aum. Mane. Padme. Aum." already spoken of) he passed in. He saw before him the commencement of a great winding stair hewn out of the rock, and this he slowly ascended. It was long and steep, and he was utterly tired both in body and mind. The stair was lighted at intervals by silver lamps of antique form, suspended from the roof by chains of the same metal, burning with a soft steady light, and giving out a faint but delicious perfume. He saw no one, but as he ascended a soft strain of music seemed to hover in the air, whether from voices or instruments he could not tell. It commenced so faintly as to be scarcely perceptible, but gradually it grew and swelled, increasing in power, fullness, and beauty, until he ceased ascending, having reached a great hall, where a fountain leaped and played in a basin of richly sculptured black marble in the centre. Here, completely exhausted, and incapable of proceeding a step further, he threw himself upon a divan to rest. The strain of music waned and died away, till the ear could scarcely determine the precise moment of its ceasing. But it ceased, and the only sound that broke the stillness was the soft and silvery plash of the fountain. And after a little time Loroio fell asleep.

A. E.

[*To be continued.*]

AHMEEK THE BEAVER.

"Very pleasant is your dwelling,
 O my friends, and safe from danger;
 Can you not, with all your cunning,
 All your wisdom and contrivance,
 Change me, too, into a beaver?"

HIAWATHA.

THOSE who have read Longfellow's poem will surely remember the tricks and transmigrations of Pau-Puk-Keevis, and how he coaxed the beavers into letting him come among them and be made a beaver, that he might hide and escape his enemies. This charming story comes involuntarily to one's mind, in thinking about beavers at all; the descriptions are so fresh, and Ahmeek takes such a hold on one's affections from his mingled sagacity and kind-heartedness. "O, my friend, Ahmeek the Beaver," began the rogue Pau-Puk-Keevis,

"Cool and pleasant is the water,
 Let me dive into the water;
 Let me rest there in your lodges,
 Let me, too, become a beaver!"

But on first hearing the request:

"Cautiously replied the beaver.
 With reserve he thus made answer—
 Let me first consult the others,
 Let me ask the other beavers."

Which he accordingly does, diving into the water for the purpose; and soon after "the others," equally cautious, come to the surface of the pool to make a personal inspection of the stranger.

"From the bottom rose the beavers.
 Silently above the surface
 Rose one head and then another,
 Till the pond seemed full of beavers,
 Full of black and shining faces."

And then the consent is given; for with all their "wisdom and contrivance" they did not discover that Pau-Puk-Keevis was a rascal. He has his way, therefore, and the transmigration takes place:

"Black became his shirt of deer-skin;
 Black his mocassins and leggings;
 In a broad black tail behind him
 Spread his fox-tails and his fringes:
 He was changed into a beaver."

We linger over this fiction, for it is "cool and pleasant" as the water in which the beavers are described as having built their lodge, *i.e.*, the common house, which is the great characteristic of beaver architecture.

And turning from fiction to fact, we can assure our young readers that the facts of beaver life have their romantic side too—indeed are so wonderful, that travellers have often been carried away by enthusiasm into fancying a good deal more than they saw, or at any rate into interpreting what they saw as something more wonderful than it really was. Hence the marvellous tales we meet with of their building houses many stories high, with platforms supported by carefully piled foundations; of their interlacing the stakes with boughs of trees, throwing in mud and stones to consolidate the work, and then at last plaistering the whole over with a kind of mortar prepared with their feet, and *laid on with their tails*,* which they had before made use of to transport it to the place where it was wanted. Then the houses, we are told, have different apartments to eat and sleep in; the floors are "curiously" strewn with leaves or pine branches to keep them clean and comfortable, and there are two entrances, one to the land, the other next the water, &c.

Believing all this, and a good deal more, well might M. Bonnet, the French naturalist, describe a society of beavers as a "company of engineers working upon organized plans, which they rectify or modify as circumstances require; carrying them out with as much perseverance as precision; all animated by one mind, and combining their wills and energies for a common end—and that always the general good of the society. In one word," he exclaims, "beavers had to be discovered to be believed in. A traveller ignorant of their existence, but seeing their habitations, would conclude he had come upon a nation of very industrious savages."

These marvellous stories of beavers were current and fully credited till in 1795 the traveller, Mr. Samuel Hearne, published the result of his personal observations on the subject, and gave the world the true version of the wonders they supposed they had seen; joking at the same time the ardent believers in beaver-reason by remarking that, after such statements as were then abroad about them, little more

* "Les murs ont environ deux pieds d' épaisseur, et sont très bien maçonnés. Les parois sont revêtus d'une sorte de stuc apliqué avec tant de propreté, qu'il semble que la main de l'homme y ait passé; et ce n'est pourtant que la queue du Castor que exécute cela!" Ch. Bonnet: Contemplation de la Nature, 1781.

remained to be added besides "*a vocabulary of their language, a code of their laws, and a sketch of their religion!*"

Now it may seem a useless waste of time to have repeated such old wives' tales merely to contradict them, especially as Hearne's account has been quoted and re-quoted in every popular work that has touched on the subject; but they have an interest in more ways than one. In the first place, it is only justice to the naturalists who preceded Hearne to show that their mistakes were rather misinterpretations than wilful misstatements; while, on the other hand, we learn a wholesome lesson ourselves by seeing how far a heated imagination can distort both mental and bodily vision; for the danger has not died out because Mr. Hearne's sober-minded accounts of beavers have enlightened us on that particular subject.

The facts, then, as to these undoubtedly wonderful animals are as follows:—It is generally in June or July that they assemble in companies varying greatly in number, but sometimes of 200 or 300 at a time, on the borders of lakes, ponds, rivers, or creeks connecting lakes, for the purpose of choosing a spot suitable for the island homes which it is their peculiar nature to construct. And in this choice they have several things to consider. First, they require such a depth of water as is certain not to be frozen to the bottom by the frosts of winter; secondly, they prefer running water to still, on account of the use they make of the current above in conveying wood and other necessaries to their dwelling-places. Hearne adds, "and because houses built in streams are less easily taken than those in standing water." That they secure a current when the place suits in other respects is certain, unless their population be so large for the neighbourhood that some must take to the lakes and ponds. With regard to the depth of water, where they cannot get it exactly to their mind, or have reason to fear that the water in the stream above may ever freeze or fail, and so leave their habitations dry, they provide against any possible accident in the following ingenious manner: At a convenient distance below their building-place they throw a dam right across the stream, just as we should do ourselves for a similar purpose, and by this means insure round their dwellings a sufficient quantity of water at all seasons to keep their entrance doors below the surface—that being their great object; while to prevent an excess which might submerge the whole habitation, they leave an opening in the embankment to let the water out when it rises above a certain level!

This dam or embankment, which is of very frequent occurrence—though never made when rendered unnecessary by natural depth of water—is the first building operation of the beavers, and the whole company join in executing it. But *how* is the question; for these dams are strong masses of wood, mud, and stones so intermixed as to secure solidity, and they are of considerable extent where a river is wide as well as shallow. Where are the beaver's tools for such a work? Where do they get their hatchets, their pickaxes, their spades, their wheelbarrows?

Nay! they have not to look beyond themselves for tools. If they do not find driftwood sufficient, and want a tree or two besides, say ten inches in diameter, for instance—a party of three or four of them sit round it on their haunches, and gnaw it down with their four huge front teeth or “incisors,” which, having chisel-like edges, and being very powerful, accomplish the work with very little trouble. Long ago the American Indians discovered the value of these natural tools, and stuck them in wooden handles to make use of in carving their bone weapons.

Here it is to be observed that our intelligent little friends collect driftwood and cut down trees only in the upper part of the stream in which they are going to build, and thus, as before hinted, save themselves the trouble of conveyance. For which purpose they cut through the trunk in such a manner that it shall fall towards the water; but whenever personal labour is necessary, it is their *teeth* they make use of to drag the logs from one place to another, as well as to cut off branches and make them portable. After being dropped into the current, the trees and branches so obtained are of course carried safely down to the building place, and there detained, and laid sideways across the stream, being kept in their place by stones and mud. For all the old stories about piled foundations to these dams are delusions of the imagination. Both dams and houses are masses of wood of all sizes, commonly placed crosswise, and intermingled with mud and stones in such proportion as to secure solidity and firmness; but certainly not built up on stakes, as was once supposed. They so thoroughly answer their purpose, however, that old embankments, after frequent repairs (for they are kept regularly repaired), will resist almost any amount of water and ice. Moreover, they are sometimes so well wooded that birds build their

nests in the trees which have rooted and sprung up from the green willow, birch, and poplar branches, originally thrown in with the heavier wood. There is another curious peculiarity. They are differently shaped, according to the nature of the stream. Where the current is very strong, they are formed with a considerable curve, the convex side to the stream, while in quieter water they are thrown across nearly in a straight line. The conveyance of the mud and stones, which form so important a part of the solid mass of their embankments and houses, is another proof of beaver ingenuity. They carry these materials between their little forepaws and chins, and, Hearne tells us, are so expeditious in their work, that he has seen thousands of these tiny handfuls of mud so conveyed during one night—night being always, be it observed, the worktime of beavers.

With respect to the beaver houses or lodges themselves we sadly need more exact information. Still, all accounts agree in describing them as dome-shaped, and closed in so that no enemy can get into them from the land, the only entrances being from the water and, there is little doubt, always below it. Also they are built of the same materials as their dams, and in the same way with the wood held down by stones and mud; and their one object in raising them above the water seems to be that they like to have a dry place to lie on; for, being amphibious animals, they do not care to be under water for a very long time together, and need therefore a dry place of retreat for sleeping, or occasionally eating; but such a thing as a separate set of eating and sleeping apartments is unknown. They build in companies of various sizes. Major W. Ross King, in his "Sportsman and Naturalist in Canada," mentions seeing one of their old settlements, to which the name of "Beaver Town" had been given, near Niagara; and Mr. Lord, in his "Naturalist in Vancouver's Island and British Columbia," describes another in the lower Klamath Lake, which he decided "must be the head centre of the entire beaver population of Oregon," so great was its size. At a rough guess he concluded this lake to be thirty miles in circumference, and "more like a huge swamp than a lake; simply patches of open water, peeping out from a rank growth of rushes, at least twelve feet in height." He tells us that "in some of the patches of open water there certainly was not room to jam in even a tiny beaver cottage of the humblest pretensions, although the open space occupied by the town was many acres in extent." "Where could one find

a more enjoyable sight," exclaims Mr. Lord in conclusion, "whether viewed with the eye of a naturalist or lover of the picturesque? Before me is the reedy swamp, with its open patches of water, glittering like mirrors in the bright sunlight, rippled in all directions by busy beavers—some making a hasty retreat to their castles; others swimming craftily along, crawl on to the domes, and peep at the intruder."

This leads us to the fact Mr. Hearne mentions, that beaver lodges are of very different sizes, according to the number of families who agree to inhabit them; but even in one case he describes, where a dozen apartments were thus joined together for as many families, there was no communication from one to the other, except by water. Each household knew its own cell, and was no further implicated with its neighbour than by friendly intercourse, and the fact that different families are always ready to combine in their labours for building or repairing the necessary dams and houses.

Beavers choose their building grounds and cut their wood chiefly in the summer, and at the same season lay up stores of provisions for the winter, by collecting bark and the green boughs and branches of trees, and sinking them near the door of their habitations by stones laid on the heap; the bark of trees and the root of a kind of water lily (*Nuphar luteum*), which grows in the water, being their chief food during winter. In summer, when most of the beavers go about on shore, they eat several kinds of herbage, and the berries of shrubs. The actual building of a new *lodge*, or common house, seldom begins before the middle of August, and is never completed till the cold weather sets in; and the builder's last act is to put on a final coat of mud, which, being accomplished in the late autumn, freezes hard when winter comes on. This being done year by year, the walls, especially the roofs of the lodges, become exceedingly strong, sometimes six or seven feet in thickness. Hearne speaks of these annual late autumnal mud coverings as "a great piece of policy," for by the roofs freezing, in consequence as hard as stones, their enemy the "wolverine," or "glutton" (*Gulo luscus*), is kept out. He also mentions, as no doubt the origin of the idea that beavers used their tails for trowels, their habit of flapping them occasionally as they walk over their work, and always when they plunge into the water; a custom they retain even when domesticated—for, be it observed, beavers are easily tamed, and make very pleasant, docile indoor companions, learning to answer to

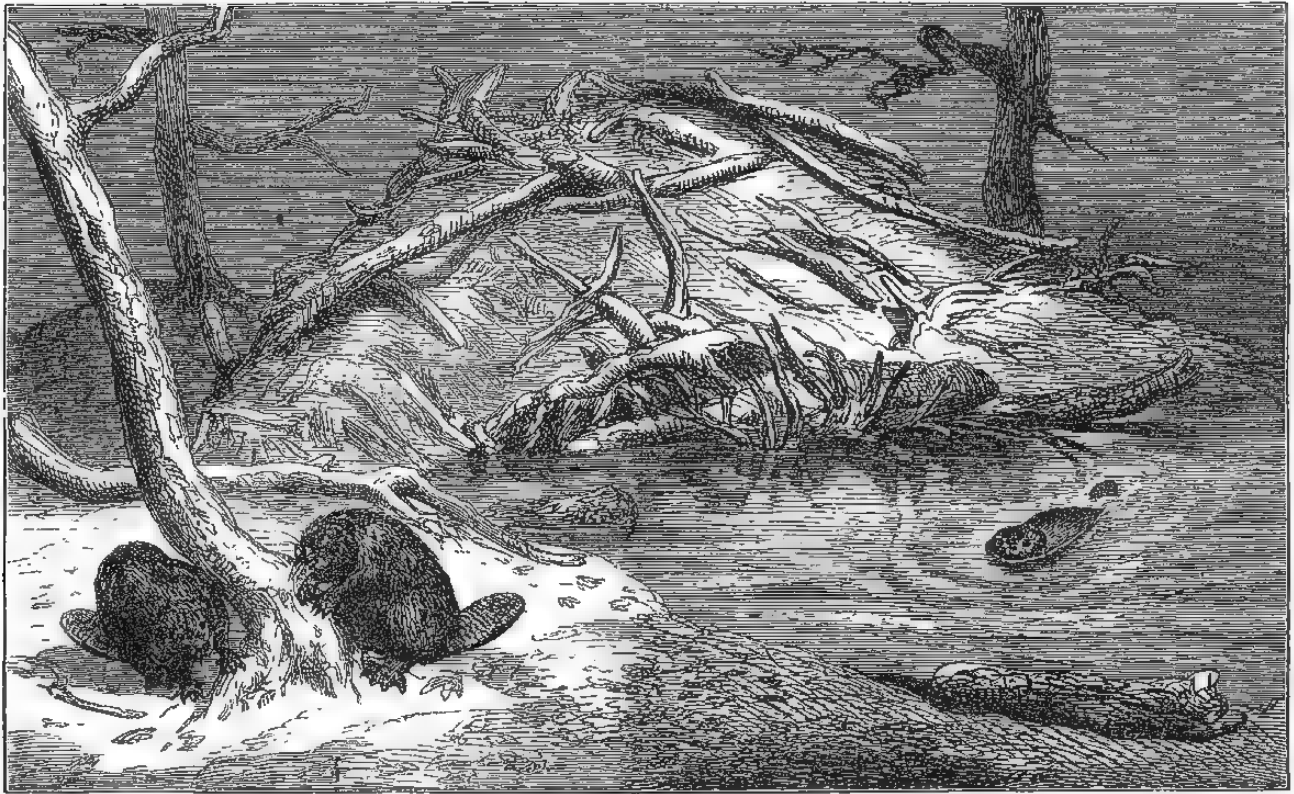
their names, and following those they are accustomed to like a dog; and quite as much pleased as any domestic animal at being fondled.

But, after all, M. Bonnet's philosophy, if not his facts, is correct. They do not reason. Mr. Wood, in his "Sketches and Anecdotes of Animal Life," quotes the account of a tame beaver, kept by Mr. Broderip, in which the building propensity, as an unreasoning instinct, was carefully observed. The creature built purposeless dams across the corners of the room with anything it could lay hold of, and the family took care to leave a variety of materials in its way. A sweeping-brush and a warming-pan were among the large things he chose, and, after laying these crosswise, he filled up the area between the ends with rush-baskets, books, sticks, cloths, dried turf, or anything portable! Another curious fact Mr. Broderip mentions is, that after the animal had built his house, and carried in cotton and hay to make a nest, he sat up and combed his fur with the nails of his hind feet. He was also very fond of dipping his tail in water, and when it was kept moist he never seemed to care to drink. Strange to say, bread and milk and sugar were the pet beaver's favourite food; a curious change from the green bark of trees, his natural food; but, it must be owned, he also liked succulent fruits and roots. He was a most entertaining creature, Mr. Broderip said; and his account is enough to tempt any one, who had the power, to follow his example, and bring one of these animals home to be placed among the domestic pets of an English household.

The scientific name of the common American beaver is *Castor fiber*. Length of head and body about three feet and a half; of the tail or "caudal paddle," about a foot. It is three years in attaining its full size; its fur varies from glossy brown to almost black, and was, till lately, in great request for gentlemen's hats and ladies' bonnets. Its tail is used as a rudder in diving or ascending, and is flat, scaled, and oar-like. Its hind paws are webbed.

In conclusion, we must allow the beaver to be one of the most gifted of the lower animals, but still the limits of its powers are fixed. The beavers of to-day have made no advance from the beavers of generations ago, and they are born from age to age, with neither more nor less of ability. In other words, the race of Ahmeck does not *progress*.

We are happy in being able to illustrate our beavers from real life. The woodcut, by M. Gris t, which accompanies this paper, was drawn



THE LODGE BUILT BY THE BEAVERS IN THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, LONDON.

from the lodge built by the beavers in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park. Some time ago they burrowed their way from their enclosure in the gardens to the canal, as offering them a larger field for their operations. They were, of course, reclaimed, and measures were adopted for keeping them more safely enclosed.

P.S.—Since the foregoing pages were in type, an interesting paper on the subject has come under our notice. A French translation of Mr. George Cartwright's account of beavers, as extracted from his "Journal of Transactions on the Coast of Labrador," 1792, 3 vols. 4to. He preceded Hearne, therefore, in exposing the fallacy of popular accounts of beaver life, but his work does not seem to have attracted the same attention as Hearne's.

We gather some important facts, however, from his statements. One, that the entrances to the lodges are gently sloped passages, leading from the chamber above to at least three feet below the surface of the water, and thus alone the creatures go in and out! Of these there are sometimes one, two, and even three; and these entrances are called by the hunter "The Angles," and to discover the direction in which they lie is his first object when preparing to capture the inhabitants.

Another fact worth notice is, that beavers will build near the banks, provided that the water there is sufficiently deep. If not they take to the centre of the stream or pond, choosing a shallow spot or island if they can find one. The lodges are generally oval—ten or twelve feet from end to end, eight or nine across. They are made of mud scooped from the sides or bottom of the stream, mixed with wood and stones, and thrown up into a dome-shaped mound from four to seven feet high, which they hollow inside as they go on, and so obtain a chamber. Sometimes beavers will build on the same piece of water for three or four years in succession; but generally they prefer building a new dwelling every year. At other times they will repair some old deserted habitation, or build another by its side, whence arises, as Cartwright thinks, the idea that their lodges have several chambers. Occasionally they will even build a small "hovel" near the one they live in, for the purpose of taking refuge in if attacked! There are curious additional particulars: and as Mr. Cartwright professes to clear away old errors, and relate what he has himself witnessed, we are bound to accept his statements as far as they go.

Nurse's Song.

A NEW SETTING TO AN OLD SONG

Music by ALFRED SCOTT GATTY.

Hush - a - by ba - by on the tree top,

The first system of musical notation for the song. It features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The lyrics 'Hush - a - by ba - by on the tree top,' are written below the vocal line.

When the wind blows the cra-dle will rock; When the bough breaks the

The second system of musical notation, continuing the vocal and piano parts. The lyrics 'When the wind blows the cra-dle will rock; When the bough breaks the' are written below the vocal line.

ff
cra-dle will fall; Down will come Ba - by, cra-dle and all.

ff *p*

The third system of musical notation, concluding the first phrase. It includes dynamic markings: *ff* (fortissimo) above the first measure and *ff* and *p* (piano) below the piano accompaniment. The lyrics 'cra-dle will fall; Down will come Ba - by, cra-dle and all.' are written below the vocal line.

2.

Hush-a-by baby up in the sky,
On a soft cloud 'tis easy to fly;
When the cloud bursts the rain-drops will pour;
Baby comes down to mother once more.

THE FOLLOWING LULLABY MAY ALSO BE SUNG TO THE SAME AIR :

A LULLABY.

Lullaby father, evening is come,
When the sun sets 'tis time to be home ;
When the day dies the day's work should end—
Lullaby father, sleep is a friend.

Lullaby mother, rest in your chair,
Grown are the babes who needed your care ;
Weary is toil, but short is the day,
Happy the sleep that bears it away. M. G.

A CHILD'S WISHES.

(From the German of R. REINICK.)

A CERTAIN old knight had a little daughter called Gertrude ; and when his brother died, leaving an only son, he took the boy into his castle, and treated him also as his own child. The boy's name was Walter. The two children lived together like brother and sister ; they only played where they could play together, and were of one heart and of one soul. But one day, when Gertrude had gone out alone to pick flowers beyond the castle gate, some gipsies came along the high-road, who stole the child and took her away. No one knew what had become of her ; the poor old father died of grief, and Walter wept long days and nights for his Gertrude.

At last there came a warm spring day, when the trees began to bud, and Walter went out into the wood. There, in a beautiful green spot, a brook bubbled under the trees, where he had often sat with Gertrude, floating little boats of nutshells on the stream. He sat down there now, cut himself a hazel stick for a hobby-horse, and as he did so he said to himself :

“ Ah ! if I were but a grown-up knight, as tall and stately as those who used to come to my uncle's castle, I would ride out into the wide world and look for Gertrude ! ”

Meanwhile, he heard something screaming near him, and when he looked up he saw a raven, which was stuck so fast between two branches of a tree that it could not move, whilst a snake was gliding towards it to devour it. Walter hastily seized his stick, beat the snake to death, and set the raven free.

"A thousand thanks, my dear child," said the raven, who had flown up into a tree, from which he spoke. "A thousand thanks : and now, since you have saved my life, wish for whatever you like, and it shall be granted immediately. A year hence we will speak of this again."

When Walter heard this, he saw at once that the raven was an enchanted bird, and exclaimed with joy :

"I should like to be a noble knight with a helmet and a shield, a charger and a sword !"

All happened just as he wished. In an instant he was a tall stately knight, his shield stood near him, and his hobby-horse became a proud charger, which, to show that it was no ghost, but a real horse of flesh and blood, began then and there to drink out of the stream.

At first, Walter could not think what had happened to him, but stood as if he were in a dream. Soon, however, a new life seemed to wake within him ; he swung himself on to his horse, with all the energy of youth, and rode far out into the land to look for little Gertrude.

Like other knights, he met with many adventures on his way. There was always something to contend with, either wild beasts or else knights, who, like himself, roved about the country delighting to find any one with whom they could do battle. On every occasion, however, Walter came off conqueror, for he was far more valiant than any of his opponents.

At last, one day he came within sight of a mountain, on which stood a high castle belonging to a certain queen. As he reached the summit, he saw from afar a little maiden who sat playing with her doll before the castle gate, and when he drew nearer he found that it was his little Gertrude. Then he put spurs to his horse, and shouted joyfully :

"Good day, dear Gertrude." But the child knew him not. As he drew nearer, he called again :

"It is I, indeed ! it is cousin Walter ;" but the child believed him not. And when he sprang from his horse to kiss her, and his armour, sword, and spurs rattled and clashed as he did so, the child was afraid that this strange man would hurt her, and she ran away back into the castle.

Poor Walter was very much troubled. He went in, however, and presented himself to the queen, who received him very graciously. He told her all that had happened, and learnt from her that she had bought Gertrude from the gipsies. But when he begged that she would let him take his dear little cousin away with him, she consented only on condition that the child herself should be willing; for Gertrude had become very dear to the old queen. So she called the little maid in, and said:

"Now look here, my child: This really is your cousin Walter.. Do you no longer love him, and will you not go away with him?"

The child looked at the knight from head to foot, and then said in a troubled voice:

"Since you both declare that it is Walter, I suppose I must believe it. Ah! if only he were still as little as he was a year ago, I would go into the wide world with him, wherever he wanted; but now, I never can. It would be no good, whilst he is like that. If I wanted to play hide and seek, as we used to do, his armour would shine, and his spurs rattle, and I should know where he was directly. If I wanted to go to school with him, he could not sit by me on the little benches at the little tables. Then what could a poor child like me do for such a stately knight? If I tried to work for him, I should burn my little hands; if I tried to make his clothes, I should prick my little fingers; and if I ran races with him, I should hurt my little feet. If I were a grown-up princess, indeed, it would be a different thing."

Walter could not but feel that what Gertrude said was true. So he took leave of them both, mounted his horse, and rode away. But the queen and Gertrude watched him from the battlements of the castle.

He had not ridden many steps, when a voice from a tree called, "Walter! Walter!" and when he looked up, there was the raven, who said:

"A year has passed since you wished to be a knight. If you have another wish, speak, and it shall be granted; but observe, what you wished before will then be at an end."

To these last words Walter paid no attention. The raven had no sooner said that he might have another wish, than he interrupted it, exclaiming "Then I wish Gertrude to be a grown-up princess!"

But even as he spoke, he himself became a child again, and his horse a hobby-horse, just as they had been a year ago. But when he

looked up to the battlements, there stood by the queen a wonderfully beautiful princess, tall and slim and stately; and this was—his Gertrude! Then the boy, taking his hobby-horse, went back up the castle steps, and wept bitterly. But the queen was sorry for him, took him in, and tried to comfort him.

And now there was another trouble. Dearly as the Princess Gertrude and the boy Walter loved each other, they were not so happy as they should have been. If Walter said to her, "Come, Gertrude, and we'll run races, and jump over the ditches," she would answer, "Oh! that would never do for a princess; what would the people say?"

If Walter said, "Come and play hide and seek," Gertrude would answer again, "Oh! but that would never do for a princess; I should leave my train hanging on the thorns, and my coronet would be tumbling off my head."

Then if Gertrude asked Walter to bring in some venison for the table, the boy would bring her a mouse instead; and if a bull or a mad dog came after them, Gertrude must snatch Walter up in her arms, and run off with him, for she was much bigger than he, and could run a great deal quicker. Meanwhile he remained in the castle, and the boy became very dear to the old queen.

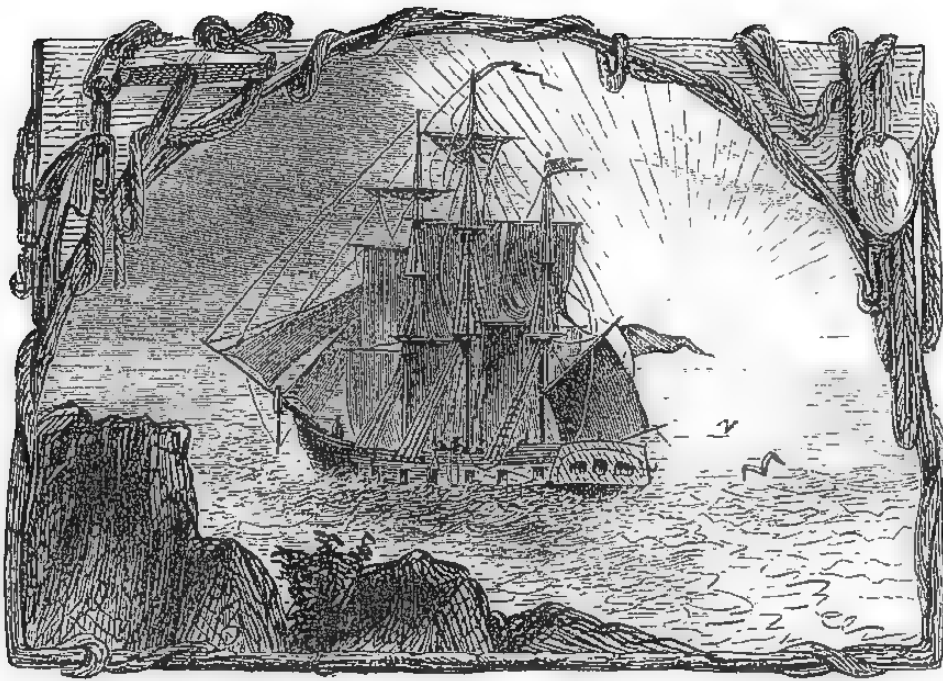
Another year passed by, and one morning Gertrude sat under a tree in the garden with her embroidery, whilst Walter played at her feet. Then, as before, a voice called out of the tree, "Walter! Walter!" And when the boy looked up, the raven was sitting on a branch, who said, "Now once more you may wish, and it shall be granted; but this is the last time, therefore think it well over."

But Walter did not think long before he answered, "Ah! let us both be children all our lives long."

And as he wished so it happened. They both became children as before, played together more happily than ever, and were of one heart and of one soul.

But when another year had passed by, and the children sat plucking flowers and singing together in the garden, an angel flew down from heaven, who took them both in his arms and carried them away—away to the celestial gardens of Paradise, where they are yet together, gathering the flowers that never fade, and singing songs so wondrously beautiful, that even the blessed angels hear with joy.

J. H. G.



“THEY DESIRE A BETTER COUNTRY.”

Heb. xi. 16.

THE first shock of parting is over. Mother, look up! Have they not gone to seek afar off that happy, prosperous home, which the circumstances of social life in the old land do not always allow its children?

When the first letters come, which tell the only news worth hearing, viz.: that all is well with your dear ones, how peaceful will be the smile on your lips, how glad and grateful the heart within your bosom! what a sweet sleep will steal over your eyes that night as they close upon tears of joy! All is well! Details may amuse or interest, but the comfort lies in those three brief words—All is well.

And there is a land whence no letters come with the message of “All is well;” but there all *is* well, with a certainty that knows no change to those who have reached it—“having desired that better country” while in life.

Bereaved ones—mourners—why do you call yourselves so? Your dear ones are not the less yours because absent now, and you, desiring the same land, will rejoin them soon. Tears, indeed, are not forbidden, but when they rain heaviest, accept the comfort of what you believe. Again and again say, “All is well,” indeed, though

“ In dear words of human speech,
We two communicate no more.”

A CHILD TO A ROSE.

(DEDICATED TO CECILIA TENNYSON.)

WHITE ROSE, talk to me!
 I don't know what to do.
 Why do you say no word to me
 Who say so much to you?
 I'm bringing you a little rain,
 And I shall be so proud,
 If, when you feel it on your face,
 You take me for a cloud;
 Here I come so softly,
 You cannot hear me walking;
 If I take you by surprise,
 I may catch you talking.

Tell all your thoughts to me!
 Whisper in my ear!
 Talk against the Winter,
 He shall never hear.
 I can keep a secret
 Since I was five years old:
 Tell if you were frightened
 When first you felt the cold;
 And, in the splendid summer,
 While you flush and grow,
 Are you ever out of heart
 Thinking of the snow?

Did it feel like dying
 When first your blossoms fell?
 Did you know about the Spring?
 Did the daisies tell?
 If you had no notion,
 Only fear and doubt,
 How I should have liked to see
 When you found it out!
 Such a beautiful surprise!
 What must you have felt
 When your heart began to stir
 As the frost began to melt!



"WHITE ROSE, TALK TO ME!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO."

Do you mind the darkness
 As I used to do ?
 You are not as old as I—
 I can comfort you.
 The little noises that you hear
 Are winds that come and go ;
 The world is always kind and safe
 Whether you see or no ;
 And if you think that there are eyes
 About you near and far,
 Perhaps the fairies are watching—
 I know the angels are.

Yet you must be lonely
 When all the colours fail,
 And moonlight makes the garden
 So massy and so pale,
 And *anything* might come at last
 Out of those heaps of shade :
 I would stay beside you
 If I were not afraid.
 Children have no right to go
 Abroad in night and gloom,
 But you are as safe in the garden
 As I am in my room.

White Rose, are you tired
 Of staying in one place ?
 Do you ever wish to see
 The wild flowers, face to face ?
 Do you know the woodbines
 And the big brown-crested reeds ?
 Do you wonder how they live
 So friendly with the weeds ?
 Have you any work to do
 When you've finished growing ?
 Shall you teach your little buds
 Pretty ways of blowing ?

Do you ever go to sleep ?
 Once I woke by night,
 And looked out of the window,
 And there you stood moon-white ;
 Moon-white in a mist of darkness,
 With never a word to say.

But you seemed to move a little.
 And then I ran away;
 I should have felt no wonder,
 After I hid my head,
 If I had found you standing.
 Moon-white, beside my bed.
 'White Rose, will you love me?
 I only wish you'd say!
 I would work hard to please you
 If I but knew the way.
 It seems so hard to be loving.
 And not a sign to see,
 But the silence and the sweetness
 For all as well as me.
 I think you nearly perfect
 In spite of all your scorns.
 But, white rose, if I were you,
 I *wouldn't* have those thorns!

M. B. S.

SEE-SAW.

THE felled oak in the corner of the timber-yard lay groaning under the plank, which a party of children had thrown across him to play see-saw upon.

Not that the plank was so very heavy even with two or three little ones sitting on each end, nor that the oak was too weak to hold it up—though, of course, the pressure was pretty strong just at the centre, where the plank balanced. • But it was such a use to be put to!

The other half of the tree had been cut into beautiful even planks, some time before, but this was the root end, and his time had not yet come, and he was getting impatient.

“Here we go up, up, up!” cried the children, as the plank rose into the sky on one side. “I shall catch the tree-tops—no! the church steeple—no! the stars.”

Or, “Here we go down, down, down!” cried the others. “Safe and snug on the ground—no! right through the world—no! out at the other side. Ah! steady there, stupid old stump!”

This was because the plank had swerved, not the tree.

And so the game went on ; for the ups and downs came in turns, and the children shrieked with delight, and the poor tree groaned loudly all the time.

"And I am to sit here, and bear not only their weight but their blame, and be told to keep steady, when it is they who can't be depended upon ; and to be contented, while they do nothing but play pranks and enjoy themselves," said he ; but he said it to himself, for he did not know which to complain to—the children or the plank. As he groaned, however, he thought of the time when he was king of the little wood, where he had grown up from the acorn days of his babyhood, and it broke his heart to be so insignificant now.

"Why have they not cut me into planks like the rest?" continued he, angrily. "I might have led the see-saw myself then, as this fellow does, who leans so heavily on my back, without a thought that I am as good or better than himself. Why have they not given me the chance of enjoying myself like these others—up in the sky at one end, down on the ground at the other, full of energy and life? The whole timber-yard, but myself, has a chance. Position and honour, as well as pleasure, are for everybody except me. But I am to stick in a corner for others to get a stand upon—forgotten, despised, made a tool of—merely that. Miserable me!"

Now this groaning was so dreadful, it woke the large garden snail in the grass hard by, whose custom it was to come out from his haunt under the timber-yard wall every morning at sunrise, and crawl round and round the felled oak, to see the world come to life, leaving a slimy track behind him on the bark wherever he moved. It was his constitutional stroll, and he had continued it all the season, pursuing his morning reflections without interruption, and taking his nap in the grass afterwards, as regularly as the days came round.

But napping through such lamentation was impossible, and accordingly he once more began to crawl up the side of the felled oak, his head turning now to one side, now to the other, his horns extended to the utmost, that, if possible, he might see what was the matter.

But he could not make out, though he kept all his eyes open, in the strict sense of the words ; so by-and-by he made the inquiry of his old friend the tree.

"What is the matter, do you ask?" groaned the oak more heavily than ever—"you who can change your position and act independently

when you wish; you who are *not* left a useless log as I am, the scorn and sport of my own kith and kin? Yes, the very planks who balance themselves on my body, and mock me by their activity, have probably come from my own bosom, and once hung on my branches, drinking in life from the life I gave. Oh miserable me! miserable, despised, useless!"

Now there may be plenty of animals to be found with more brilliant abilities and livelier imagination than the snail, but for gravity of demeanour and calmness of nerve who is his equal? And if a sound judgment be not behind such outward signs, there is no faith to be put in faces!

Accordingly, Sir Helix Hortensis—so let us call him—made no answer at first to the wailings of the oak. Three times he crawled round it, leaving three fresh traces of his transit, before he spoke, his horns turning hither and thither as those wonderful eyes at the end strove to take in the full state of the case. And his are not the eyes, you know, which waste their energies in scatter-brained staring. He keeps them cool in their cases till there is something to be looked at, and then turns them inside out to their destined work.

And thus he looked, and he looked, and he looked, while the children went on shouting, and the plank went on see-sawing, and the tree went on groaning; and as he looked, he considered.

"Have you anything to say?" inquired the oak, who had had long experience of Sir Helix's wisdom.

"I have," answered the snail. "You don't know your own value, that's all."

"Ask the see-sawers my value!" exclaimed the prostrate tree, bitterly. "One up at the stars, another beyond the world! What am *I* doing meanwhile?"

"Holding them both up, which is more than they can do for themselves," muttered the snail, turning round to go back to the grass.

"But—but—stop a moment, dear Sir Helix; the see-sawers don't think that," argued the tree.

"They're all light-minded together, and don't think," sneered the snail. "Up in the sky one minute, down in the dust the next. Never you mind that. Everybody can't play at high jinks with comfort, luckily for the rest of the world. Sit fast, do your duty, and have faith. While they're going up and down, it's your balance that's the saving of both."

EDITOR.

THE SEA-FORTS AT SPITHEAD.

OUR young readers must all know Portsmouth by name, even if they have never been there; and that it is the great and long established naval arsenal of England. Its convenience as a harbour was known to the Romans, who fixed one of their stations at Porchester, on its northern shore. In the reign of King John it was a naval station; and the importance of the town is shown by its having been incorporated, or made into a borough, at least as early as in the reign of Richard I. The island of Portsca, on which the town is built, is now connected with the mainland by the railway; and the towns of Portsca and Portsmouth are so contiguous, and the fortifications of both so nearly united, that they may be regarded as one strong fortress, protecting the harbour and the vast naval stores which are collected around it. The Portsmouth dockyard has always been considered the largest in the kingdom, covering, as it does, about 120 acres. It contains all the means for manufacturing, repairing, and storing everything connected with our naval shipping. Here are the forges of Cyclopean magnitude, where the largest anchors are made; here are the huge masts shaped, to fit into our first-rate men-of-war; spars and sails, of all sizes, are prepared for immediate use, and incalculable miles of rope arranged in perfect order: moreover, you may see the beautiful steam machinery invented by the elder Brunel, which soon converts a shapeless piece of wood into a finished block for the ropes to run through. The largest war-ships are built and launched here, and return after long service for repair. Portsmouth is also the grand dépôt for every description of ordnance stores; and, as you walk about the place, sentries and battlemented walls, with cannon, drawbridges, and barracks, remind you that you are in a fortified citadel. All the old preparations, however, against an enemy, are now regarded as worthless, in consequence of the wonderful improvement in artillery; and we shall presently show how Portsmouth is in future to be protected.

The first time we were at Portsmouth is now many years ago, when a large family party were on their way to the Isle of Wight. The George Hotel, in the High Street, received us, and as our number

was considerable, we occupied a large room of some historical association, inasmuch as it is the public dining-room in which the Lords of the Admiralty feast when they come down on special business; and where celebrated admirals have often been entertained, before taking command of their fleets for critical service. We could not help thinking how Howe and Jervis, Hood and Nelson, had all, probably, been here; nor help contrasting the two cases of the Duke of Buckingham, in 1628, coming to Portsmouth to take command of a fleet destined for the relief of Rochelle, and being stabbed in his lodging before he sailed by Felton, whose blow only expressed the popular indignation against the hated nobleman, with that of Lord Nelson, in 1805, cheered from the heart of the assembled multitude, as he took boat for his flag-ship, which was to carry him to victory and death at Trafalgar. Of course, one goes on board the guard-ship, the old "Victory," at the mouth of the harbour, and looks, with mournful interest, at the dark corner in the cockpit, where, stretched on a mattress, and surrounded by fellow-sufferers, the great Nelson breathed his last.

There is another inn of some interest at Portsmouth, the "Keppel's Head," into which, by mistake, we went one day for luncheon, and found the only occupants of the coffee room were midshipmen, including Prince L——, to whom, no doubt, our clerical presence, together with a son some ten years old, was a laughable novelty. But we were soon in pleasant conversation with these young officers; and one, who had just got command of a gunboat destined for China, was very urgent that our young companion should enter the service.

But these recollections are of Portsmouth as it was, not of what it will henceforth be. All the old fortifications are condemned as useless, and a line of forts, traversing the top of Portsdown Hill, behind the harbour, and extending from the mainland across the Solent at Spithead, round the south of the Isle of Wight, and terminating about Havant, including a circuit of seventy miles, will in future be the means of guarding our great naval arsenal from hostile attack. We will endeavour to give some idea of an interesting portion of this grand line of fortification, which is now in course of erection.

In company with a friend, more competent than anyone else to explain everything connected with the sea-forts at Spithead, we started at 8 A.M. by the railway for Stokes Bay, a few miles south-west of Portsmouth. The terminus is on a shingly beach opposite to Ryde, to

which place it affords the most direct passage. On this beach were immediately apparent all the operations connected with the erection of the one land fort, and five others that were being built in the sea. The first sight was a double line of *gangtrees*, forming a straight street, as it were, sixty-five feet in width, and about a quarter of a mile long. But you must know what "gangtrees" are. They are solid square piles of wood, rising twenty feet high from the ground, and are placed about twenty feet apart from each other in their rows. These piles are such as you may see used in the Thames Embankment, or in constructing bridges; and along the tops of the two rows of piles runs a single line of iron rail, by which a stage, the same width as the gangtree street, is supported, and which it traverses from one end to the other, as it may be wanted; and on the stage was a travelling steam crane, called a "traveller crab," which moved to and fro at the will of its driver, and lifted the huge stones about with ease and safety. What these stones were may be imagined, when we say that there were from 30,000 to 40,000 tons of them, all shaped and ranged for use betwixt the gangtrees, allowing a road down the middle wide enough for a cart. A large proportion of these stones were granite, and there were concrete blocks made on the spot, and no less enduring than granite under water. The average weight of the stones was five tons, varying even to eight tons. Their average measurement was seven feet six inches long, five feet six inches wide, and three feet thick. They had all been shaped at the quarries before delivery, and are all fitted and marked on shore, as they will afterwards be built under and above the sea. The "traveller crab" does all this. Wherever it is wanted, the stage on which it stands travels up and down on the top of the gangtrees, and stopping at the right place, the engine of the crane moves transversely exactly over the stone which has to be picked up. A chain then descends, with a "Louis" at the end, which is merely a tongue of iron about six inches long. This is wedged into a hole in the centre of the block of stone, which is then lifted and let down by steam power just on the right spot. There are about twenty-five steam engines connected with these works. The stranger walking betwixt these adjusted blocks of granite, as they rest variously arranged one upon another, might fancy he was in a city of old Egypt, yet hardly know whether it was more like a ruin or a rising street.

A little eastward of this gangtree colonnade is the Gilkicker Fort, one of the land defences belonging to the group of fortresses which are to guard the entrance of the Solent. The shape of this fort is semi-circular, and its radius measures one hundred and ninety feet: the height will be from forty to forty-five feet. It will consist of a basement, two gun floors, and probably some building above: its outer walls are fourteen feet thick in solid masonry, faced with granite; and behind are casemates or arch-roofed chambers, built of twenty-six feet of fine brick masonry; making the width of the building just forty feet. These casemates will hold the ammunition; and there are narrow roofed passages which communicate with them, and large circular holes through which the shells can be drawn up by the gunners above. Gilkicker, when finished, will very much represent what the sea-forts will be in appearance above water.

After inspecting this fort, and seeing how the concrete was made of a particular sort of lime and shingle-stone, mixed and poured liquid into wooden cases which mould them, and in which they set and dry, we embarked in a steamboat for the five sea-forts, which are in course of erection. The names of these forts are as follow: That nearest the mainland is called Spitbank, where is the Spithead anchorage: the next is the Horse Fort, and the next No Man's Land—these two are the largest: the next is St. Helen's, and the fifth Ryde Sand. They are from one to two miles apart from each other, and from two to six miles distant from Stokes Bay. We were soon at No Man's Land, so called from an old tradition that the shoal on which the fort is being built was once above water, and there was no man to own it.

As they were still working under water, all that was visible was a circle of double piles—gangtrees, as before, with the "traveller crab" above. In the centre was a large wooden floor, on which were buildings of wood in which the men lodged, as many as sixty or seventy men being sometimes housed there. Here we had to climb a vertical ladder from a small boat which rowed us within the fort, and afterwards to walk over the sea across a double plank, that we might sit on the top of the gangtree to watch the divers. This, perhaps, was the most exciting part of our little cruise. First we saw two divers, men clad warmly in woollen, from head to foot: they had come out from dinner to be clothed in gutta percha, and resume their submarine employment. They descended a ladder into a boat in which were ten

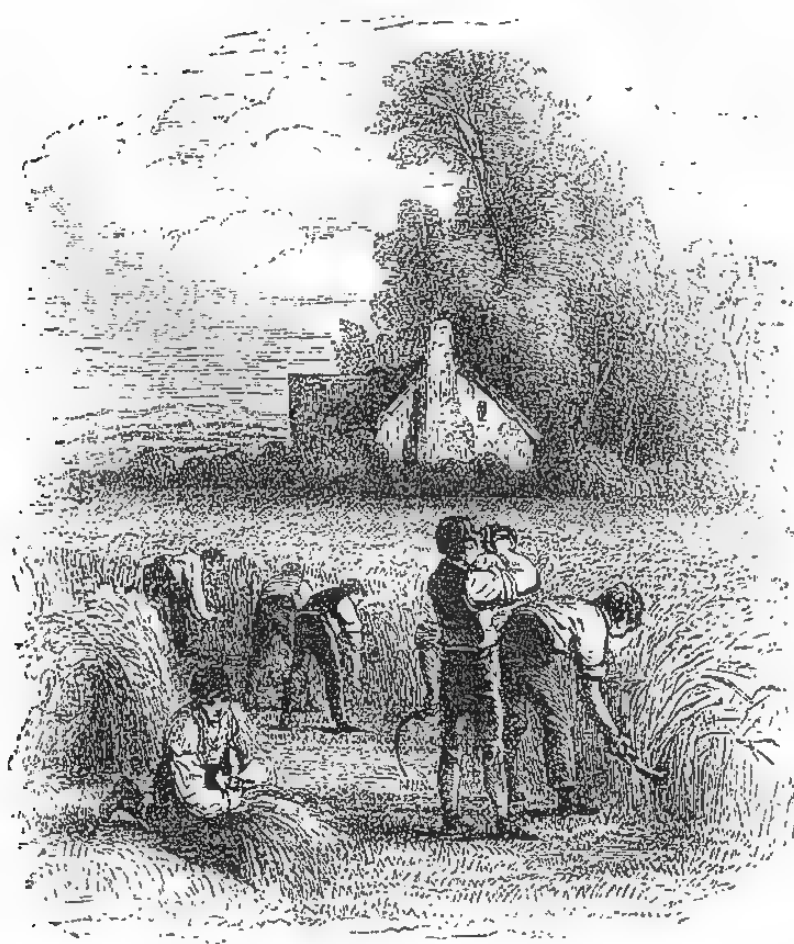
men, and then commenced the dressing for their duties. First they drew on a complete suit of gutta percha, which was only open at the neck and wrists; this was tied closely round their necks, and it was so elastic, with india rubber cuffs, that the water could not penetrate up the sleeve. Then they put on shoes with leaden soles that were an inch thick; a very heavy mass of lead was next tied on their shoulders; and finally a copper helmet, as big as a "Waterloo" coal-scuttle, was fitted over their heads, and completed their equipment. In the front of the helmet were three round holes, glazed so that they could see all ways; and at the back of it was fixed the flexible tube, through which the air would be pumped for them to breathe. Thus clad and burdened with lead, they were helpless in the hands of their companions; so that their legs had to be lifted over the gunwale of the boat, and each diver, with a rope in hand, floundered like a great seal to the bottom of the sea, which was only shallow where they now entered it. What took place in the boat above was this: There were two air-pumps in it, each worked with revolving handles by two men, whilst two other men sat idle, to take the place of either as he grew tired of pumping. The remaining two men held the ropes, which the divers also handled, and by the number of pulls given they communicated with the man above who managed the "traveller crab." Forthwith this instrument commenced its work of letting down the blocks of stone, whilst the signal-men, taught by the pulls upon the ropes which they held, gave orders for their exact deposition. We found that the divers could adjust the stones as fast as they could be supplied, and as no cement or mortar can be used under water, the masonry adheres simply by its own weight. The divers when under water, notwithstanding their encumbering dress and leaden weights, can move about as actively as when on land in their ordinary clothes, which arises from the equal pressure of the water everywhere. A regular day's labour for a diver consists of only four hours, but he often works six; his wages are good, and his employment does not seem to injure his health. A good diver can be as much as 100 feet below water; but lower than that the pressure becomes intolerable. All the sea-forts are circular excepting St. Helen's, which is oval in form; to this fort we proceeded in our steam-boat, and, there being some peculiarity in the foundation, we will endeavour to describe it.

The work was begun here by sinking an iron cylinder, measuring

six feet in diameter, to the depth of thirty-five feet below the bottom of the sea. This large cylinder was placed in the very centre of the site of the fort, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the stratum was sufficiently firm and solid to bear the weight of the proposed building. It was proved to be so, by the discovery of a bed of clay at the depth above mentioned ; and it was then found necessary to surround the site of the fort with a complete ring of large iron cylinders, which touch each other, and are filled with granite and concrete. The masonry in these cylinders will ultimately form, as it were, pillars of stone, to protect the foundation from being undermined by the wash of the sea, when after a long period the iron casings have corroded away. Above the bed of clay is sand in large quantities, all of which has to be excavated and carried away from the interior of the ring of cylinders ; when a massive bed of concrete will be let down into the sea in close boxes, and form a foundation for the reception of the masonry of the fort, as smooth and hard as rock itself. It is an interesting fact worth recording, that the cylinder in the centre of the fort is kept open and empty, and may at some future time serve the purpose of a well of fresh water, obtained from below the sea for the use of the garrison. The Horse and No Man's Land forts are the largest ; at the base they are two hundred and forty feet in diameter ; above the water they will measure two hundred feet across ; thirty-four feet of masonry will be below the sea, built in twelve courses of stone, and they will rise from forty to forty-five feet high above the water. Vast and, as we must hope, effective as these fortifications will prove, be it remembered that they are not devised for the protection of the country, but of the chief arsenal at which our fleets are built and equipped. An island must depend on her navy for protection. "I tremble for England," said the great thinker of the age, "if we cannot keep the seas." After visiting No Man's Land and St. Helen's forts, we were compelled to return to Stokes Bay to catch the evening train ; and as the day had been beautiful and the sight both novel and highly interesting, no unaccustomed landsman could fail to have enjoyed the trip.

ALFRED GATTY, D.D.

AUGUST MEMORANDA.



AUGUST, being the sixth month of the calendar of Romulus, was named *Sextilis*, as July, from being the fifth, was called *Quintilis*; and it continued to be known as *Sextilis* until, as some say, the Emperor Augustus put the finishing stroke to Julius Cæsar's reformation of the calendar (see July Memoranda), when it was named *Augustus* in his honour by a decree of the Senate.

July and August are the only months which have retained the names given them by the emperors, but we read that at one time April was called *Neronius*, and May *Claudius*.

The reasons assigned by the Romans for calling *Sextilis*, *Augustus*, were, as recorded by old writers, that certain principal events

in the life of Augustus Cæsar took place during that month—his first consulate, B.C. 42—and the three great triumphs he celebrated on three successive days in August, B.C. 28, with great magnificence, for three great successes in arms: that in Illyricum, the battle of Actium: the conquest of Egypt. On this occasion the Temple of Janus, which had stood open 205 years (as it always did in times of war) was closed.

Verstegan says of the Saxon month: "August they called *Arn-monat* (more rightly *barn-moneth*), intending thereby the then filling of their barns with corn."

During the evenings of August, after sunset, those who wander and watch on the

banks of the Marne, the Seine, and the Rhine, or indeed almost any European rivers, may chance to see the birth and death of an autumnal species of the race *Ephemera*, of which our May-fly is another example. The *Ephemera*—children of a day (whence their name)—are described as having only a few hours' existence; coming to life at sundown, and dying before midnight: and many a pretty verse has been written on the subject of their fleeting existence, and many a comparison made between it and the life of man. But it is to be noted, that the *Ephemera*, though living only five or six hours in their perfect condition as flies, have existed for three whole years previously as worm-like grubs, in tiny holes bored by themselves in the mud of the bank-side, below the water.

There they are safe from the attacks of devouring enemies, and thence at the end of the three years they come out as winged nymphs,* very nearly, but not quite, perfectly developed as flies. They can fly a little, but only get to some convenient resting-place, to which they may affix themselves for the third transformation. Of this we read that the creature is seen to shiver, as if from cold, until the fine membrane or skin which encloses it bursts in the middle of the back, and the wings being thus enabled to throw off their covers, become quite free, and the perfect insect, or "*Imago*," "*takes wing and away*" for its short period of enjoyment. Before midnight it has laid its eggs, and so provided for a fresh generation, and then dies. It is to Swammerdam, a Dutch naturalist, that we are indebted for this account of the Day-fly or *Ephemera* of the Continent.

32. August 6. This day is preserved in the calendar of the Church as that on which the Transfiguration of our Blessed Saviour took place. Not that we speak of it as a precise anniversary, for some uncertainty necessarily hangs around Scripture dates; and perhaps it is in the providence of God that so it should be. Man is by natural impulse a worshipper; it is an instinct pointing to the

highest of all ends, but yet needing guidance to prevent abuse; for hence come all the idolatries which the world has seen, whether of false gods among the uninstructed heathen, or of the idols of civilized Christian life, of which Lord Bacon speaks—wealth, fashion, pleasure, &c. And it may be that, if we had more absolute certainty about the days and hours and holy places connected with our Blessed Saviour's life on earth, we might drift into an adoration of what rather belonged to the letter than the spirit of His coming among us. The very longing we feel to be more assured on such points, as if some additional blessing would come to us in consequence, looks a little as if there would be danger in the realization of such wishes.

But as commemorative anniversaries, these marked days are beyond all price to us. Year by year they take us round in a chain of thought from one great event to another, and it is our own fault if we do not say "*Selah*," *pause and meditate*, to each in its turn. And few among them have greater comfort for us than this of the Transfiguration.

To be *transfigured* is to be *changed from one figure or form into another*; and of the occasion in question we read that Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and brought them up into "a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And behold there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him."

Moses and Elias represent the Law and the Prophets, as our Blessed Saviour did the Gospel, and so the three dispensations were united under Him in one glory. But we may gather another lesson still.

Of the three thus transfigured into a condition of supernatural glory, one, our Lord, was yet in this human life, as we are now. Another, Moses, had died the common death of all men. The third, Elias (Elijah), had been carried "by a whirlwind into heaven." Yet all appeared in the same glory, and all preserved their identity, for the three disciples knew them for Moses, Elias, Christ. This may give us some notion of "the change" of which St. Paul speaks (1 Cor. 15): "We shall not all

* Most insects go through four stages of life: Egg, larva, pupa, imago. The larva is commonly called "grub," or "maggot;" pupa, "nymph," or "chrysalis."

sleep, but we shall all be changed." Death, as we know it, is no *necessary* part of the change, except as we inherit it as the fruit of sin. Had he remained obedient, Adam might have been changed, without the bodily decay which he had to submit to, and those who are alive at the second coming of our Lord may be changed in some similar manner. Death is not necessary to it, we have said, but, thanks be to God, death does not *prevent* it!

Moses reappeared at the Transfiguration in the same glory as that of the living Christ, though his earthly body had long been dissolved in dust. And the mysteriously-removed prophet, in whatever condition he had remained during the long ages preceding our Saviour's birth, was there also in the same ineffable beatitude!

What a striking testimony to the fact that death does not confuse our individual identities! And how little do the accidents of the flesh affect the immortality we shall at last put on!

"Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust
Half that we have
Unto an honest faithful grave;
Making our pillows either down or dust."

1346. August 26. The Battle of Crecy. One of the boldest invasions of any foreign country was that undertaken by Edward III., of England, in July, 1346, when with an army of 30,000 men, composed of English, Welsh, and Irish, he landed at La Hogue, and for a month ravaged all the northern frontier of France, and penetrated almost to Paris without encountering any serious opposition. Philip, however, King of France, collected his army of 120,000, and marched in pursuit of the invader, who was becoming embarrassed in his progress of destruction by the bridges over the rivers being thrown down. In this emergency Edward made a stand at Crecy, and gave command of the first of the three divisions to his son, Prince of Wales, afterwards called the Black Prince, then only fifteen years old. Thus he waited the assault of the French, who insisted on immediately attacking him, though after a hasty march and some disorder in consequence, they were not properly prepared to do so; whilst the

perfect discipline, and cool as well as gallant spirit of the English, gave them so great an advantage, that in spite of great inferiority of numbers they remained complete victors in the field. It is commonly said that the English first used cannon in this battle, and owed their superiority to this new weapon. This statement is still open to some doubt, though a passage in a manuscript copy of Froissart confirms it, and, provided the authenticity of the passage was certain, would go far to establish the fact. At any rate they conquered, and the French king was wounded and fled, while the Kings of Bohemia and Majorca were slain. The former being blind, the reins of his horse were led by two attendants, who fell with their royal master, and the horses of the three were found standing together over the corpses of their dead riders after the battle. To the great courage and admirable skill of the Prince of Wales, boy as he was, the victory was greatly attributable; and in memorial the Princes of Wales have ever since borne the crest and motto of the King of Bohemia—three ostrich feathers, with the German words *Ich dien*, "I serve." After this victory, Edward besieged and took the town of Calais which the English contrived to keep possession of 210 years.

1485. August 22. The battle of Bosworth Field, in which Richard III. was defeated and killed by Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII.

This day put an end to the long struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster (see our May number). Edward IV., of York, had died; and his little son, Edward V., with his younger brother, had been murdered in the Tower by Crookbacked Richard, their uncle, who having thus cleared the way for his own advancement, ascended the throne as that King Richard III., whom common report, and above all Shakespeare's magnificent play, have consigned to eternal infamy. Efforts have been made by later historians to clear both Richard III. and Henry VIII. from the shame which attaches to their names, and people have even denied the traditionary hump which has been for so long the personal characteristic of Richard. But these "historic doubts" are

matter for older scholars. The hump is a very useful thing to remember cruel King Richard by, and we do not mean to part with it! The death of the two little princes in the Tower also was a very suspicious circumstance against their uncle the next heir, to say the least of it, and so we leave the story as Shakespeare left it.

Believing it, however, we may go on to say that vengeance was at hand. Henry, Earl of Richmond, one of the Lancastrian party, who had taken refuge in France during the reign of Edward IV., of York, having persuaded the French king (Charles VIII.) to support him, resolved once more to try the fortunes of war in behalf of the Lancastrian cause. He was no doubt tempted to this by hearing of the disaffection of many of the English nobility to King Richard's rule; at any rate, backed by a very large force of French troops, he landed in Wales and advanced into England. King Richard meanwhile, who, to do him justice, was not behindhand in bravery, went out to meet his rival with an army which, had its leaders been faithful, might have sufficed to send the invaders flying. But there was "treachery in the camp." The armies met on the plains of Bosworth, near Leicester; but soon after the battle had begun, Lord Stanley, with 7000 men under his command, deserted to the Lancastrian earl, and after a fierce and desperate fight, King Richard was defeated and slain, and the Earl of Richmond proclaimed king as Henry VII. His claim to the throne was certainly a remote one, though it traced up to John of Gaunt by his mother; and by his marriage with the York heiress, Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV., all disputes were silenced. Their children inherited the double right, and the white and red roses bloomed at last in peace together. Henry VII.'s mother was a very remarkable woman. Margaret, Countess of Richmond, was a lady greatly celebrated in her day for piety and learning, and she left behind her two glorious monuments of her desire to benefit her fellow creatures in the two colleges she founded and endowed at Cambridge — Christ's and St. John's. Some curious particulars are told of the foundation of Christ's. The whole staff

of monks at the Abbey of Creeke, in Norfolk, having died of the plague, and the abbot, last of all, being carried off by the same disease, there was no one left to elect a new abbot, and the monastery escheated to the Crown. Whereupon the Countess Margaret got permission of her son, the king, to appropriate a portion of the lands so forfeited towards furnishing means for the foundation of Christ's College in 1505, and that college still receives rents derived from the estates so surrendered. Edmund, Earl of Richmond, the good Margaret's first husband, and father of Henry VII., was himself the son of Sir Owen Tudor and Catherine of France, relict of Henry V.; and thus it was that the Tudor blood was introduced into our line of kings, Henry VII. being the first of that race, which reigned down to 1603, when the house of Stuart came to the throne on the death of Queen Elizabeth, in the person of James I.

1782. August 25.—The 25th of August, the anniversary of the death of Louis IX., commonly called Saint Louis, was chosen by the French Academy (Académie Française, instituted by Cardinal Richelieu, 1635), for the annual meeting of its members, and on these occasions prizes were distributed to the various authors in different branches of literature, many of them reading their compositions aloud to the assembled members. The prizes were various, and were founded by different individuals; but it was not till 1782 that we hear of one instituted as *the prize of national virtue* (Prix de vertu du peuple); and it was awarded on this first occasion to a nurse named L'Espalier, who having been sent for to wait on a well-born but poor gentlewoman, remained with her through a protracted illness, not only nursing her with all the tenderness of a mother, though unpaid for the trouble, but out of her own limited savings purchasing medicine and delicacies for the need of the poor invalid. Two other good deeds had been proposed to the Academy as meriting the prize. One was performed by a man named Damesaque, who, walking on the quay one day in winter, saw the ice break under three children who were sliding upon it unconscious of danger. The water closed over them, but in the next instant Damesaque

plunged after them without waiting to take off his clothes, and, at the risk of his own life, succeeded in bringing them all safe to land. The other was that of a French portress who had shared her lodgings and subsistence with a woman who had been forced to leave the hospital as incurable.

The Academy argued that the action of Damesaque was an isolated one, and might have arisen from a sudden impulse of heroic enthusiasm, which did not prove the existence of a mind steadfastly habituated to the performance of duty. As to the portress, they thought she had possibly only given what she did not actually want herself; besides that, it was a personal friend she was assisting.

The third action, on the contrary, that of the nurse L'Espalier, appeared to the judges to combine all the merits essential for a claim to the prize.

1st. L'Espalier exercised her kindness to an unknown person.

2nd. She exercised it for a long time and with an unflinching constancy.

3rd. She exercised it in spite of offers made to herself from people who had previously paid her well for her services, and to whom, therefore, she was under some obligation of gratitude besides the hope of future benefit. Those richer people, she argued, could pay for other nurses, but the poor lady whom she was assisting might die for want of help if she deserted her.

4th. She had not only given time and labour, but also her own money to furnish medicines and delicacies for the invalid, as was mentioned before.

The Archbishop of Aix, director of the Academy, having declared that its members were anxious to reward a good action rather than a brilliant one, and constancy in virtue rather than a splendid instance of it, the prize was awarded to the nurse L'Espalier.

The annual distribution of these prizes was continued up to August 25, 1790, when an interesting incident occurred. Nicholas and Francis Potel, father and son, living at Boulogne, near Paris, happening to walk along the banks of the Seine, heard the cry of several persons drowning in the river. Francis, the

son, sprang in first, and succeeded in getting hold of a woman, whom he drew to shore. Plunging in a second time he caught hold of a mother and daughter, who seemed likely to draw him down with them by their struggles. For three quarters of an hour he was seen contending against their weight, and the force of the current. Seven times his head rose and disappeared below the water, but at last his efforts were successful. He saved the two women, drew them to land, then sat down exhausted, weeping that he had no power to help any of the others; on which the old father at once took his son's place, and plunging into the river returned, dragging by their hair a woman and a little boy. This was a puzzle for the academicians, who, not liking to award the prize to one at the expense of the other—each being equally anxious to resign it in his relative's favour—hit upon the notion of dividing it between the two. But the Queen, Marie Antoinette, hearing of the difficulty, solved it in her own regally kind way, by offering a second prize of the same value as the first, so that the claims of both candidates met their just reward.

At this last annual sitting of the French Academy on the day of Saint Louis, in 1790, two subjects were proposed for two eloquence prizes in the following year. A panegyric of Benjamin Franklin, the American assertor of the "rights of man," and that of J. J. Rousseau, the French philosopher. But already the growling of the revolutionary storm, which was to overthrow all monarchical institutions, was sounding in men's ears; and the uproar was in some measure due to the principles of these very men, whose eulogy the academy proposed to pronounce. The institution perished therefore, as it were, by the hands of the people it had desired to immortalize. The French Academies were suppressed by a "decree" on the 8th of August, 1793. It is a satisfaction to recall this anecdote, and to know that, in a condition of society to which the French revolution was greatly due, there were still Christian souls left to perform acts of Christian charity, and a Christian queen to reward them.

1786, August 5, Jonas Hanway died.—

Some of our readers may recollect the droll anecdote told by Dr. Johnson of one Twalmley, the inventor of a sort of box-iron. Dr. Johnson was "checking" Boswell for boasting too frequently of himself in company. "Boswell, you vaunt so much as to provoke ridicule. You put me in mind of a man who was standing in the kitchen of an inn, with his back to the fire, and thus accosted the person next him. 'Do you know, sir, who I am?' 'No, sir,' said the other, 'I have not that advantage!' 'Sir,' said he, 'I am the *great* Twalmley, who invented the new flood-gate iron.'"

We have repeated the tale for the benefit of those who may not yet have opened the grand volumes of Dr. Johnson's biography; or, having opened them, may have missed this particular anecdote among the thousand-and-one things worth remembering in the pages of that really remarkable book.

This anecdote occurred to us involuntarily, when, after recording royal battles and the fate of the illustrious in the world's history, we found ourselves writing the name of plain "Jonas Hanway," after the date of August 5, 1786.

We can imagine our young friends feeling half disposed to skip Jonas Hanway's death altogether, as a matter in which there could not be much interest. Still even the Twalmleys of the world have done something for us; and so long as they do not attempt greatness as a right, they may chance to have honour "thrust upon them," each in his vocation. Box-irons are an ingenious invention; but how much more are we not indebted to the man who introduced us inhabitants of a rainy island to the use of the umbrella! Since the days of Jonas Hanway nothing better adapted for its purpose of protection from rain has been discovered than the umbrella.

We have particularly made use of the ex-

pression "to the use of the umbrella," because it is known that as an article of *virtu* an umbrella had been brought over from the East to England long before Mr. Hanway's days. But he was the man who by perseverance and contempt of ridicule brought the useful invention into common use. For thirty years after his return from his travels in Persia (with the trade of which he was connected as a Russian merchant, and where he first saw umbrellas), he walked the streets of London in wet weather with one of those, then, strange-looking foreign defences over his head; mobbed by children as he went along, and no doubt at first considered eccentric, even by his friends. But he literally walked down contempt and disapprobation, and lived to see his invention come into general use. Not his invention exactly, however. In Persia, it is true, he saw umbrellas used as a defence against the burning rays of the sun, and these were no doubt of the same sort as those we see figured in pictures of the Mandarins of China. Whereupon the idea struck him that these same sun-protectors might be equally well used against the inconvenience of rain; and to this purpose he applied them, and all ranks and ages now in England are the better for Mr. Hanway's device. Mr. Rogers, the poet, is said to have remarked that every young man beginning life ought to provide himself with a watch and an umbrella. Let our readers remember this, and respect the memory of Jonas Hanway, a man well known in his day, for extensive charities and great general benevolence. He published an account of his travels, and the condition of trade over the Caspian Sea. To him also the "Marine Society," and the "Magdalen Charity," owe their establishment, and he was a great promoter of Sunday Schools in days when they were but little known.—ED.